

# History of The Free Hospital for Women 1875-1975



Elmer Osgood Cappers



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*History of  
The Free Hospital for Women  
1875-1975*

Elmer Osgood Cappers

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# *Foreword*



WHEN THE PROJECT of writing a centennial history of The Free Hospital for Women was first discussed, it must have seemed highly improbable that someone with a background which was unprofessional in either the area of medicine or in the area of history would be selected to write such a work. But the unlikely choice was made, largely at the suggestion of Dr. and Mrs. F. William Marlow, Jr. The consequence, good or bad, will appear in the following pages. Because of that choice it is certain that names will be omitted which should not be omitted, and medical terms and subjects will be mishandled, perhaps to the amusement of knowledgeable readers. This is not false modesty. No writer of history can have excessive pride after reading Dr. Samuel Johnson's pithy comment. "Great abilities (said he) are not requisite for an historian, for in historical composition, all the greatest powers of the mind are quiescent." Johnson's dictum seems to endorse the selection of the writer of this centennial history, but a statement by Henry Adams appears to cast a vote in the negative. "History," he wrote in one of his letters, "has always been the most aristocratic of literary pursuits because it obliges the historian to be rich as well as educated."

Leaving these two geniuses to resolve their differences when next they shall meet, perhaps in the Houseboat on the Styx, I now offer my acknowledgements of assistance from many sources. My thanks must go first to Miss Nancy Neckes of the Administration Office who always exhibited patience whenever her daily tasks were interrupted by my requests for material from the Hospital's files, ancient and

current. Nor did Mrs. Condon or Mrs. Griffith of the Admitting Office enter a protest when I upset routine by visiting the reports in the cabinets near their desks. Mrs. Woodsum, who has a love of things historical, gave me information about the Hospital's physical plant. Mrs. Nye, the head of the Administration Office, and Miss DiPietro of the Medical Records Office gave much assistance as did a number of friendly librarians in the Boston Athenaeum, the Brookline Public Library, and Harvard Medical School's Countway Library. Mr. James King, head of Public Relations, steered me hither and yon in my search for materials. A number of my doctor friends, who as Harvard Medical School students in the twenties and thirties administered anesthesia at the Hospital, have given me their reminiscences, particularly of breakfast with awesome Dr. Graves and Miss Ewin. Miss Lillian Grahn took time from her busy schedule to share memories of her very active days as Administrator of the Hospital. Dr. Olive Smith and Dr. George Van S. Smith volunteered assistance and it proved very valuable as they furnished thoughts and facts which were unobtainable elsewhere. I am grateful to Miss Catherine Sullivan for all her typing and retyping of this history and to Miss Janet Blowney for her proofreading help.

My wife has been most patient with her husband when research and writing introduced new and strange factors into daily living. I give Dorothy sincere thanks for her toleration.

In advance, I apologize for all errors and omissions. While I am not proud of them, they are mine and are not the responsibility of the kind people who helped me so much.

Brookline, Mass.

Elmer Osgood Cappers



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# Chapter I



IN PREPARING to write the history of the first hundred years of The Free Hospital for Women, a natural initial question would be "How shall I set the table?" An equally natural answer would be "Describe briefly how hospitals came to be over the many centuries of man's efforts to cure his ills and ease his pain." A search through many library shelves failed to produce a volume devoted solely to the history of the development of our modern hospitals. As the old saying goes, "Someone should write a book!" Casual reading here and there in a number of volumes on medicine in general, on famous doctors, on public health indicates that today's hospital has appeared rather lately on the scene of man's progress. To be sure, there was an Asclepieia in ancient Greece; the Bible refers to the Bethesda of Judea; Rome had its Hospitium, and the Middle Ages its Monastic Hospitalia. But these do not much resemble our modern hospitals.

When our forebears came to this side of the Atlantic, they had little tradition to bring with them in respect to establishing and operating a hospital. Largely, the medical institutions they had left behind, were devoted to sequestering from society persons with mental ailments or contagious diseases. The Bethlehem Royal Hospital (Bedlam) and the smallpox lazarettos were sorry examples of indifference to the unfortunate. Physicians of England carried on most of their practice at home or possibly in an office, and sent their hopeless cases to the few hospitals there were, such as old St. Bartholomew's in London.

In North America, the Spaniards of Mexico and the French of Canada set up their first hospitals long before the English settlers did so. In the early days of the Colonies, particularly in Massachusetts Bay

Colony, the minister of the local church was often the only man in town with any sort of scientific education, and it frequently fell to him to try to obtain a medical as well as a spiritual cure for his ailing parishioners. Our old town histories recite the condition. In Smith's *History of Dedham, Mass.* appears this comment, "In the absence of a doctor, the Rev. John Allin not only visited the sick, but probably gave advice in illness as in most early communities the minister was the only doctor the people had." According to the *History of Weymouth, Mass.* the local clergyman was not only a successful medical practitioner but went so far as to write a small tract entitled *A Brief Guide to the Common People in the Small-pox and Measles*; it is said to be the first medical work ever published in America. As to the frequent operation of blood-letting it was usually the barber, if the town had one, who did the work, and the red stripe on the barber-pole supposedly signified that practice.

The first hospital in the English Colonies, and it was not a hospital in the modern sense, came in 1713 when the Quakers founded the Philadelphia Almshouse. Dr. James Mumford describes the situation as it existed over two hundred years ago as follows; "It may readily be supposed that our first medical establishments were lazarettos or hospitals intended for the reception of seamen and others infected with contagious disorders. Such institutions existed on the Delaware River and in Boston Harbor. But these were not hospitals in the all-embracing sense. Such establishments were very limited in their means and scope, and in the lazarettos especially; the medical attendance was of the most meagre sort and the care of patients was inefficient and often abominable."

Philadelphia was also the site of the first Colonial institution that can be called a hospital as the term is used today; and that famous, brilliant, shrewd activist, Benjamin Franklin, had a strong hand in it for which he ever afterward "took great satisfaction." The charter of the Pennsylvania Hospital was approved on May 11, 1751. Dr. Thomas Bond, the true father of the idea, began the hospital on Market Street and admitted his first patient in February of 1752. In view of the first days of The Free Hospital for Women here in Boston, it is interesting to note that Dr. Bond stipulated that "the city poor should be received without charge." However it was agreed that "paying patients should be allowed to have their own physician and surgeon."

New York City did not have an established hospital until almost forty years later. One was incorporated in 1770 and built in 1775. The building burned to the ground and was rebuilt just in time to be used



as a meeting place for the Provincial Congress. The arrival of British forces put an end to that, and for some years it served a number of purposes including the furnishing of lodgings for the indigent. Finally it was successfully equipped and The New York Hospital began its long and distinguished career in 1791.

The earliest Massachusetts hospitals were "small-pox hospitals," the first on an island in Boston Harbor in 1717. Subsequently there were such hospitals at Point Shirley and Castle William and even in far-off Martha's Vineyard. The American Revolution saw military hospitals established in Cambridge and Jamaica Plain. The first in the long line of hospitals in our Commonwealth was the Massachusetts General Hospital, founded in 1818 and opening its doors to the first patient on September 3, 1821 in a building in the West End near where an army hospital had been set up in 1777 after the occupying British Army had departed. The Massachusetts General Hospital grew but slowly. Twelve years after it began it had fifty-one patients in the general hospital and sixty-four patients with mental problems. These figures indicate that doctors were not eager to send their patients away to a strange institution; and it may be surmised that patients were not eager to go there either.

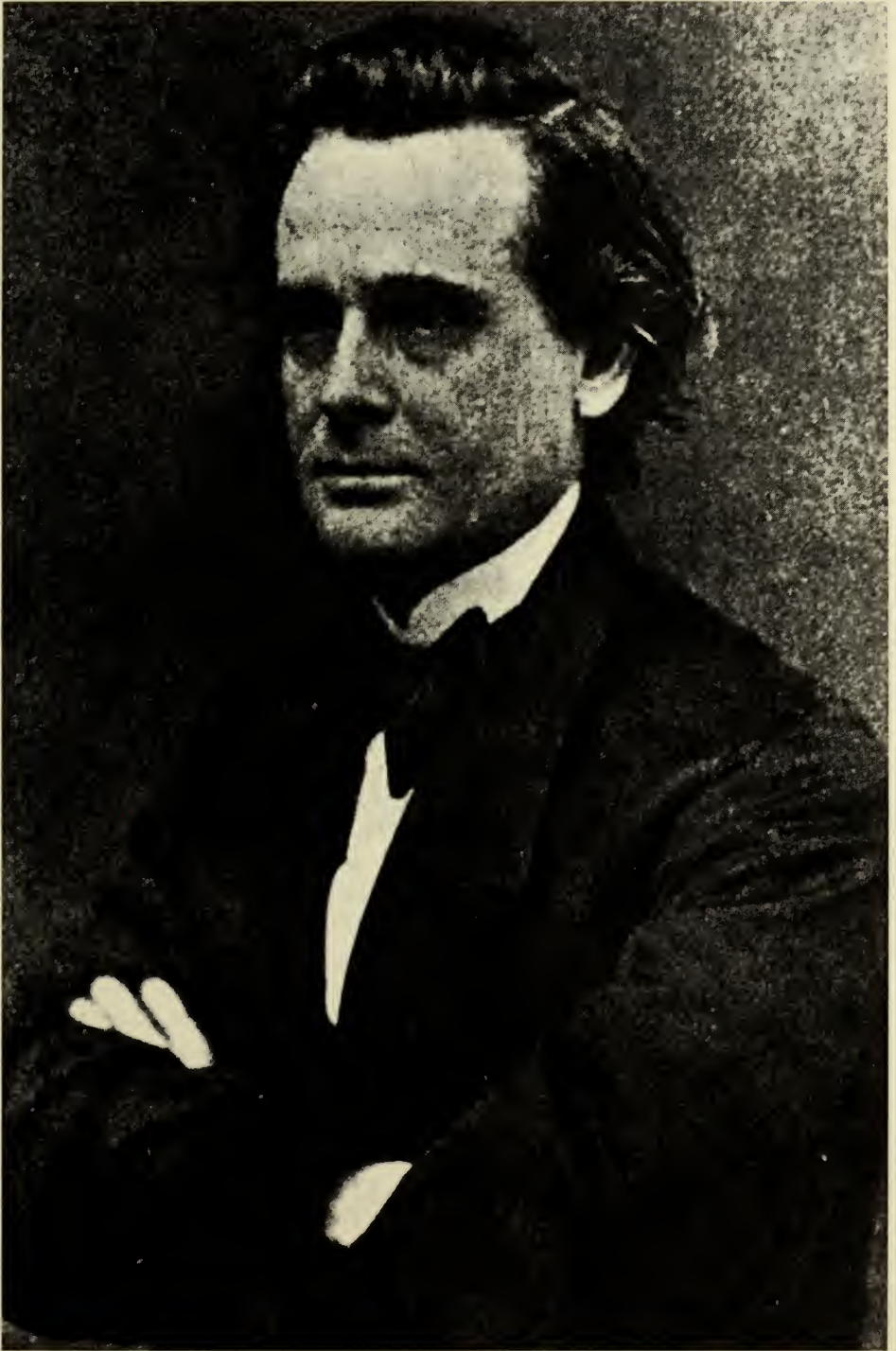
Today, it is difficult to accept the fact that our Massachusetts history of hospitals in the accepted present use of that term did not originate until 1821. When the Harvard Medical School was opened in 1782 and began to establish its extensive and brilliant record, there would have been no lectures on hospital care and procedure or management for all of these subjects lay in the future. It is also difficult for people of today to believe that the development of hospitals should have been so sluggish. The contrast between today's ideas about hospitals and those of only eighty years ago is highlighted by a comment of Rev. Edward Everett Hale made in 1895: "One of the lessons of the Civil War was that it taught us about hospitals. Some people do not believe it now, but they will come to it before the Twentieth Century is over that it is a great deal better to be sick in hospitals than to be sick in a house only half equipped for the purpose." Of course, once many of the old mores and taboos were broken down, the proliferation began with a rush. One of these taboos had to do with admitting female patients generally to a hospital. It simply was not done.

Thirty years before the Civil War a start had been made toward breaking down resistance to the idea that a woman should not go to a hospital unless she was suffering from insanity or an infectious disease. In 1832 the Boston Lying-in Hospital was founded. Before that time

according to Sidney J. Herman "in all the northern states there was no hospital for the care and treatment of women during childbirth." All babies were born at home, unless the mother had no home. Dr. Walter Channing had the idea that there should be established in Boston a place where women could go to have their babies, and with strong support from charitable citizens and philanthropic institutions of the community he succeeded in bringing into being the Boston Lying-in Hospital.

Another break with tradition, a major one, came in New York City with the founding of The New York Woman's Hospital by Dr. James Marion Sims on May 4, 1855 at 83 Madison Ave. In developing the historical background against which our Free Hospital for Women in Boston was formed it is essential to comment on Dr. Sims and his work for herein lay the seeds of its origin.

Dr. James Marion Sims was born in 1813 in a small town of Alabama, and despite years of illness he lived until 1883. He was a man of genius. Not only did he found a hospital, a great hospital, but he became the father of the science of gynecology. One of the childbirth afflictions suffered by many women over the centuries was vesico-vaginal fistula. It had been successfully treated far back in the days of ancient Egypt, but the art had been lost. When Dr. Sims was a young practitioner in Montgomery, Alabama, he came to the belief that the ailment could be cured by surgery and resolved to dedicate his life to the discovery and development of such a procedure. The injury among slave women on the plantations was fairly common as the result of inexperienced services of ignorant midwives. In 1845, Dr. Sims erected a single story, eight bed hospital near his home, and there he began his experiments. It was not a general hospital in our sense of the term since it was for his patients only. He writes very graphically of how in 1849 he discovered that when a patient was placed in a certain position, he, by using instruments of his own invention, could see the fistula. Once he had made this discovery, he was able to develop a surgical technique which was practically infallible when properly performed. Believing that his discovery should be given to the world, he moved to New York City in 1853 and published his findings. Recognition came to him almost at once. He operated not only in New York but even in Europe where at that time there was not too high a regard for American surgeons. He proved his case by repeated successful operations and was soon hailed as a great discoverer. One writer said of him that "he attained a fame such as perhaps no other physician has ever been accorded in his lifetime." A photograph of him shows determination in his face while his eyes seem to be looking "far down the future's broadening way."



*Dr. James Marion Sims*

In 1855 he succeeded with the backing of many influential men and women in establishing The New York Woman's Hospital, "the first American institution of its kind," according to Dr. James Pratt Marr. The hospital was founded primarily for the cure of vesico-vaginal fistula; the treatment of other diseases of women was to come later. Dr. William P. Graves in speaking of Dr. Sims' achievements said, "Dr. Sims, with the aid of his talented associate, Thomas Addis Emmett and his assistants Gaillard Thomas and Edward Peaslee, names now held in high honor, inaugurated the science of Gynecology in this country as a medical and surgical specialty." Dr. Sims was truly a brilliant light of the medical world, a great surgeon, and the founder of a great hospital, a hospital which in and of itself constituted a marked advance in the growth of the idea that hospitals might possibly be places where the suffering of women was not just to be endured, but one also where their ailments might be cured.



## Chapter II



IN WRITING this history, it gradually became more and more evident that there were many people connected with the development of American hospitals and particularly with the development of The Free Hospital for Women in Boston and later in Brookline who, like Dr. Sims, were touched with greatness and beyond that, even with genius. William Henry Baker, founder of our Free Hospital for Women was such a man.

He was born in Medford, Massachusetts on March 11, 1845, the son of the Rev. Abijah Richardson Baker, D.D. and Harriette Newell Woods Baker. How often the old myth that clergymen's sons are scapegraces has been disproved! The Rev. Dr. Baker was a Congregational minister who presided over several pulpits in his career. He was also a writer of note having produced a number of books on religious matters and a schoolbook on the history of the United States. The *History of Franklin, Mass.*, his birthplace, records that he published *A Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount* in four octavo volumes. That must surely be the longest commentary ever written on the Sermon. There is still in existence a small pamphlet which he wrote while in his Medford, Mass. pastorate entitled *The Ark, Ships, and Shipbuilding*. It compares methods of shipbuilding in Bible times with those of contemporary Medford; and in passing he delivers a few scathing remarks on RUM (the capitals are his), perhaps a rather daring thing to do in a town where rum was one of the chief products. For those who may be interested, he appends a register of ships which had been built in Medford up to that time.

Dr. William Henry Baker's mother was the youngest daughter of the Rev. Leonard Woods who was Abbott Professor of Theology for almost forty years at Andover Theological Seminary. She was one of a large and famous family. One of her brothers was President of Bowdoin College for twenty-seven years, the second longest presidency at that fine seat of learning. The birth of her son, William Henry Baker, left her a cripple as a result of vesico-vaginal fistula, but being confined to a wheelchair did not keep her from an active literary life. She wrote under the pseudonyms, "Madeline Leslie" and "Aunt Hattie," as well as under her own name. Some of her work was in the form of serious novels, but much of it was in the form of writing for youngsters. The best known of the latter type were *Tim, the Scissors Grinder* and *Little Frankie at School*, titles which would not produce many avid readers among the young of this present year of grace. She also probably assisted her husband in the publication of two of his magazines and helped her father write his *History of Andover Theological Seminary*. Clarke's *History of Needham, Mass.* where her husband had one of his pastorates claims that Mrs. Baker was "the author of two hundred volumes." There are numerous cards under her name and her pen names in the index file of the Boston Public Library today.

The Rev. Dr. Baker and Mrs. Baker had five sons, four of them eminent divines, while the fifth was Dr. William Henry Baker. With all the clergymen, professors, and writers in the Woods and Baker families there must have been highly intellectual conclaves whenever family reunions took place.

William Henry Baker obtained his early education at Atkinson Academy in Atkinson, New Hampshire, a preparatory school which no doubt appealed to Victorian parents since its prospectus of about that time emphasizes that its location is two miles from the railroad station and further states that "it furnishes a favorable opportunity, as students will not be subjected to many temptations incident to a location in larger and populous villages." Baker left school at the age of eighteen to engage in business; his departure may have been hastened by the Academy's advertised restrictions. He early demonstrated executive capacity and shrewdness, and was successful in his business endeavors. However, surrounded as he was by idealists, it is little wonder that he came to the conclusion that a business career did not meet his conception of usefulness in life. He thereupon entered Harvard Medical School and received his degree in 1872 at the age of twenty-seven. Subsequently, he served as a surgical house officer at Boston

City Hospital and then went to The New York Woman's Hospital as a staff resident under the famous Dr. Marion Sims. Writing in 1925 as head of The Free Hospital for Women, Dr. William P. Graves made this extraordinary statement about him: "He easily secured a position as house officer in The New York Woman's Hospital and served his allotted time under men who in their special line were at that time the best surgeons in the world. He returned to Boston with a twofold ambition: one, to cure his mother and, the other, to found a hospital in emulation of that great master, Marion Sims. The first of these ambitions he promptly accomplished. The first operation that he performed in private practice was on his own mother and was a success." When the Rev. Abijah Baker had proposed that Dr. Sims be brought from New York to perform the surgery Mrs. Baker herself had vetoed the idea and had elected to have her son operate.

Dr. Baker's second ambition, the establishment in Boston of a hospital similar to the one founded in New York by Dr. Sims, was not long in coming to realization. He had been so successful in private practice that he soon had a large following of patients and former patients who were willing to support his project. Support came also from the many clergymen who were friends and associates of his and of his parents and who were engaged in the ministry of churches in and about Boston. The influence of this group is apparent in the early records. A number of the early meetings open with prayer; when a member of the first board of trustees dies he is "called to his Maker"; and when one patient left, the report says, "By the blessing of God on the treatment she received, she was discharged, recovered." Looking ahead just a bit, it was arranged at the very beginning that there should be a list of clergymen who would come to the new hospital each week to give a sermon to the patients.

Evidence of clerical influence appears also in the records of organizational meetings. In an address given by Dr. Baker in 1908 to the Board of Lady Visitors, he said, "At the first meeting of organization held at my office No. 6 Beacon Street, August 19th, 1875, there were present Rev. Edward Everett Hale, who acted as moderator, Mr. Joseph E. Woods, Rev. A. R. Baker and Mrs. Baker (his parents), Mrs. Clara E. Clement, Mrs. Frank Hall, Mrs. E. H. Sampson, and myself." (The minutes of this meeting, if any were kept, do not seem to have survived.) The first formal organization meeting was held on October 14th, 1875, and it is that date, one hundred years ago which the Hospital has always called its birthday. The original entry reads as follows:

## ORGANIZATION—OCTOBER 14TH, 1875

At a meeting of gentlemen and ladies interested in the establishment of a hospital for the diseases of women held at No. 6 Beacon Street on the 14th of October, 1875, on motion of Rev. Dr. A. H. Baker, Rev. Edward E. Hale was chosen moderator.

A plan proposed for the Hospital was read by Dr. W. H. Baker.

In conformity with the suggestions of this plan the following committee was appointed to draw up a constitution and by-laws for the proposed Hospital:

DR. STORER

REV. DR. A. R. BAKER

DR. W. H. BAKER

A committee of five was appointed to solicit the interest of churches and persuade them to endow free beds.

For this committee the following persons were named:

REV. EDWARD E. HALE

MRS. HENRY M. PARKER

MRS. CLEMENT

MRS. HALL

MRS. JONES

MRS. H. N. W. BAKER (DR. BAKER'S MOTHER)

MRS. A. L. HARKINS

with power to enlarge their numbers.

The following were chosen officers of the Hospital:

HON. E. R. MUDGE, PRESIDENT

E. H. SAMPSON, TREASURER

J. W. WOODS, SECRETARY

DR. W. H. BAKER, VISITING SURGEON

D. H. STORER

A. D. SINCLAIR, M.D.

W. W. MORELAND, M.D.

J. P. REYNOLDS, M.D.

} CONSULTING BOARD

The meeting then adjourned to meet at the call of the committee on forming a constitution.

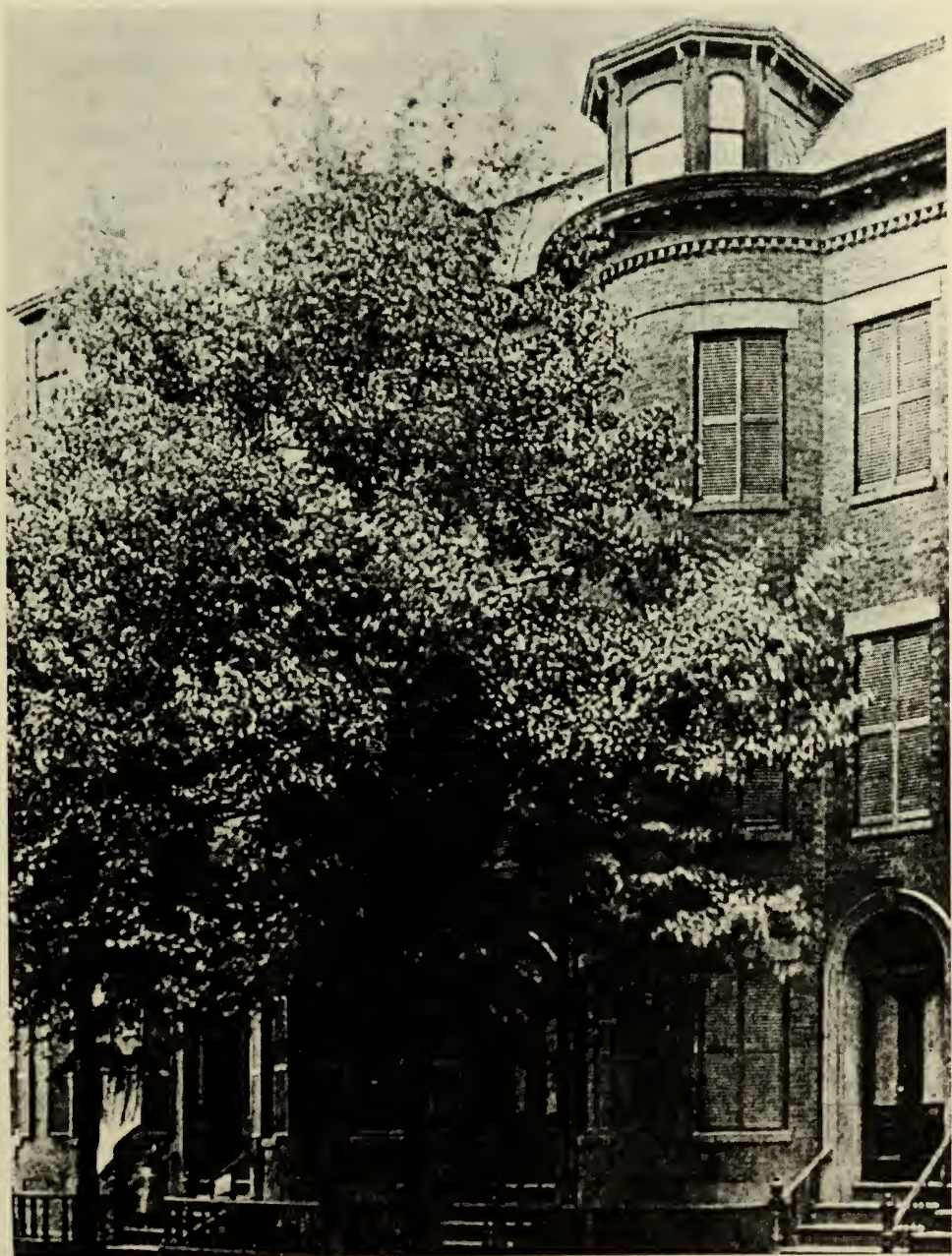
Attest:

EDWARD E. HALE

*Moderator*

It will be observed that the meeting had for its moderator, secretary, and chairman of the solicitations committee the famous Rev. Edward E. Hale whose bronze statue in the Boston Public Garden today seems





*First home of The Free Hospital for Women—16 East Springfield Street*

to be just about to take off and turn around for a trudge across the Common, perhaps to climb the hill to No. 6 Beacon Street. The Rev. Abijah R. Baker was put on the committee to write by-laws and a constitution; as things turned out he did most of the committee's work. But this should not have been too much of a chore for a man who could write four volumes on the Sermon on the Mount. The proposed constitution and by-laws were presented by the reverend doctor at a meeting held November 2nd, 1875, and they were approved.

Dr. William Henry Baker was a crusader who was able to inspire others with his own crusading spirit. His solicitations committee reported very shortly after its formation that it had received personal guarantees of assistance from Rev. Phillips Brooks, Rev. Edward Everett Hale, and five other persons. Miss Helen Angier Ames gave the first two free beds. In addition, guarantees came from King's Chapel, Clarendon Street Baptist Church, Emmanuel Church, First Church, Shawmut Congregational Church, and Church of the Unity. Many other religious bodies were to enlist in the work later on.

With this financial backing, Dr. Baker was able to get underway, and he proceeded with speed. Only nineteen days after the organizational meeting, Dr. Baker had rented a house, installed five beds and admitted the first patient. The afternoon of the opening day, November 2, 1875, he attended the organization meeting already mentioned; it was held in the new hospital. The rooms he had rented were at 16 East Springfield Street, a little street parallel with Massachusetts Avenue, pointing straight at Boston City Hospital's entrance gate. One hundred years later the building has been demolished and a vacant lot remains.

In the old, brick, bow-front house, everything had to be conducted under a very strict budget, for Dr. Baker had announced at the outset, as a basic policy, that no bills were to be contracted for unless the money to pay them was in hand, a policy he was able to maintain for many years. The patients were to be admitted and treated without charge, and they had to be poor women. This second policy later was the cause of some wrathful remarks by the doctor when he discovered two or three instances where women able to pay had got into the Hospital. Many of his remarks and the comments of others about him show that he was a determined man, and his portraits confirm the characterization.

The attending surgeons and other physicians were to furnish their services without compensation. The general business affairs would be handled by a board of trustees consisting, after the first clerical wave had passed, of prominent businessmen; probably many of them accepted

their trusteeships without realizing they would be called on to make up any deficits. Interested ladies were to form a Ladies' Board which would arrange regular visits to patients in the Hospital and in addition would endeavor to obtain donations of the furnishings necessary to run the Hospital.

As to Dr. Baker himself he would be the chief surgeon, donating his services as administrator as well. In his view, a hospital was more than a place for patient care. It should have two more great functions; it should be an educational institution, bringing instruction to many so that they might carry on the work, and it should advance the healing art through study, experiment, and invention. He was to be the chief exponent of all three functions; care, teaching and research.





## Chapter III



IN HIS first annual report in 1876, Dr. Baker wrote as follows: "The first patient was received into the hospital November 2nd, 1875. Since that time there have been sixty-five patients treated in the house. Of these, twenty were discharged cured, twenty-six relieved, and two left contrary to advice. There have been two deaths during the year and there now remain in the hospital fifteen patients. A large number of outpatients have been treated."

This unemotional, every-day, business-like summary could not have given those who heard and read the report any idea that herein lay the genesis of a great hospital, one which was to have a world-wide impact in the field of medicine. On the other hand, the summary does not give us who read it in later days any conception of what had gone on during the Hospital's first year to make Dr. Baker's brief statement possible.

A Board of Lady Visitors was created at the very beginning of the Hospital's work. The first Directress was Mrs. James H. Clement. She organized a program of visits to patients by members of the Visiting Board and also took a hand in the necessary raising of supplies. Illness prevented her continuation in the work for very long after its inception. In his first annual report, Dr. Baker paid her this tribute, "To the Directress of this Board, Mrs. Clara Erskine Clement, we feel especially indebted, for when we call to mind the instances when the nurses, tired and worn from their long watching, were relieved by her experienced hand, we feel sure that many a sufferer must thank her for the alleviation of hours of physical pain." Mrs. Clement's portrait,



showing a stately lady in a trailing gown, hangs just inside the entrance door of the present hospital building.

Others took up the task. One of the problems, that of raising supplies, was best stated by a lady of the board: "When it is remembered that every article used in the house from a rolling pin to a bedstead was to be obtained without a dollar in the treasury, the amount of work accomplished will be more readily appreciated." Speaking over thirty years later, Dr. Baker reminisced of the day in 1875 "when Mrs. Enoch Hale, whose husband was one of the most distinguished physicians of his time, brought to my office the first donation to our Hospital, consisting of one dozen sheets and an equal number of pillowslips, which she told me were for the institution which she heard I wished to establish."

It is amusing to read in one account how two of the ladies, one of them Dr. Baker's mother, overcoming mid-Victorian reserve, called on an astonished dealer in chinaware and wangled from him a surprising quantity of cups, saucers and dishes. A minutely detailed list of donors and their donations appeared in every annual report for some years. Among the items listed were a demijohn of whisky, a mop, 25 Bibles, 3 somnos, 9 gallons of oysters, a ton of coal, 4 boxes of matches, 3 wash tubs, an ice pick, 12 2¢ stamps, and a door mat. The record does not tell what a "somno" was nor what the Rev. Abijah R. Baker may have thought of the demijohn of whisky. Someone, listed only as "Fubsey," gave a donation of old cotton and one box of rheumatism remedy. The lists of givers and gifts are most impressive. They represented many hours of labor unrewarded except by the inward knowledge of contribution to a great cause.

The Board consisted of "a lady from each Society supporting a bed and one lady representing any individual who may support a bed." Not only did the ladies keep detailed lists of donations, they also kept lists of their members who were to make the daily visits to read to the patients in the Hospital. There was to be no shirking of this duty, for the monthly reports to the members of the Ladies' Board show who the visitors were to be. Even one hundred years later, the sense of dedication comes through the contents of those little record books so meticulously maintained.

Self-sacrifice and devotion were evident in other directions. Almost twenty years after opening day, at the dedication ceremony of the present building, Dr. Baker remarked, "We began in the small house, No. 16 East Springfield Street, with a capacity for the treatment of five patients, cared for by the nurse, Mrs. Packard, whom I am happy to

see present with us today, and who then served in the combined capacity of nurse, housekeeper, cook, and waitress." Unfortunately there appears to be no mention of Mrs. Packard's first name, nor could any other information about her be discovered. Such service as hers deserves a better record in the annals of The Free Hospital.

Quoting Dr. Baker again, but this time from his first annual report, (1876), "To the Episcopal Sisterhood we tender our most hearty thanks for so generously aiding us," and he then acknowledges that "their tender sympathy, unwearied watchfulness, and experienced nursing" had contributed much to the success of the fledgling hospital. The Sisters of St. Margaret had come to Boston from East Grinstead in England but a few years before to establish their convent which stands in Louisburg Square. Two novices were sent by the Convent to serve as nurses for the early months of The Free Hospital. Unfortunately, one of them, Sister Ellen, contracted pneumonia while on duty in March of 1876 and died within four days. In 1877, the Sisters, at Dr. Baker's urging, set up two beds in their own Convent Infirmary and the connection with The Free Hospital ceased. The Children's Hospital also has occasion to remember their splendid work in the field of caring for the sick.

Those in whose hands rests the business government of a hospital seldom receive recognition for their contributions, financial and executive. Their assumption of responsibility, their attendance at frequent meetings, their availability for decision, and their executive direction are seldom if ever in the public eye, and thus they are taken for granted. Perhaps to be taken for granted really constitutes the highest praise.

Dr. Baker was well aware of how much he needed them. When he came at last to retirement his final words before departure were, "And now in retiring from this, my life's work, words fail to express my great appreciation of the kindness, co-operation and firm support which I have received from your Board (of trustees); rest assured that during my remaining years the memories of my association with your individual members, past and present, will be among the most cherished of my life."

In 1875, the president named in the first minutes declined to serve. It then fell to the Hon. Benjamin E. Bates to become the Hospital's first president. Dr. Baker always seemed to gather about him an impressive group of trustees. On his first Board, seven out of the nine members were clergymen. The corporate officers were all successful businessmen, the first in a long line of able executives.

The treasurer's first annual report is not given in detail, but the reported total donations of \$3,909.36 and the total disbursements of \$3,045.36 indicate a number of things. Foremost there is proof that the policy of spending only when cash was in hand was working. Again, the figures show a comfortable balance; every hospital treasurer in our country today would be delighted to see a surplus of nearly ten percent of income. One final comment on the figures: they demonstrate how much voluntary service must have been given to produce such a small outlay. The basic pattern laid down then was continued for a number of years. In 1879 the total expenses were only \$3,500.00 of which \$1,000.00 went for groceries, \$800.00 for all salaries, and \$650.00 for rent.

In that first year other major policies were established. One was that the benefits of the Hospital were not to be confined to Boston. The authors of the policy could hardly foresee that future patients would come from all over the world. It was intended that the Hospital was to be similar "in some respects to The New York State Woman's Hospital." This policy was perhaps an acknowledgement of the fact that four of the doctors of that hospital had agreed to act as advisors. They were Doctors Sims, Emmet, Peaslee, and Thomas. But the policy which received the greatest emphasis in the early literature of The Free Hospital was that its main objective should be "the free treatment of poor women afflicted with diseases peculiar to their sex." The emphasis obviously belonged on the words "free" and "poor."

Dr. Baker was a persistent innovator in many fields having to do with medicine. In the same year that he was founding a hospital, he was taking steps to advance the medical teaching adjunct. His later words describe best what he did in this function. "The Free Hospital for Women began its work as a teaching department of Harvard University as a result of a conversation I had in the fall of 1875 with Dr. Calvin Ellis then dean of the Medical Faculty. At that time he expressed grave doubt as to the practicability of taking medical students into the wards or operating room of our hospital on account of adverse criticisms of the public, but upon my assuring him that such could be done with perfect propriety and with the greatest security to the feelings of delicacy of the patient, he entered into the project with enthusiasm. Then began a course of instruction in Gynecology, which in the following twenty years developed into a department of its own in the Medical Faculty, with its didactic and clinical lectures, clinical conferences and operative courses on both the cadaver and living subject, amounting in all to over two hundred hours of teaching in a



year of college work, given to members of the third and fourth year classes, and, being an elective course, comprised four-fifths of the said classes. Thus it will be seen that this hospital has always been a teaching institution and its governing boards have from the first realized that one of its greatest fields for usefulness existed in teaching the medical student, its doors being always open to the medical investigator and this at a time in our earliest history when most of our sister hospitals in this department of surgery were closed to the medical profession outside their own staff doctors." Dr. Calvin Ellis' expectation that the public would criticize instruction of students in The Free Hospital for Women was somewhat more explicitly stated by Dr. W. L. Burrage who wrote of Dr. Baker that "he demonstrated that gynecology could be taught to students in a public clinic in spite of the opposition of the older members of the profession who held that it was immodest and that the public would never permit such instruction." Dr. Baker went ahead with his program and proved the doubters wrong. His heart was deeply committed to the field of teaching as later chapters will show.

He was quick to recognize new procedures. When antisepsis revealed the enormous possibilities of its use in abdominal surgery, with characteristic courage he immediately entered the new field of work, and Dr. Graves, his successor, was to say later, "His name will be handed down in history as one of the foremost pioneers to develop this branch of surgical science." Another commentator, eschewing Dr. Graves' polished expression, said, "Dr. Baker believed in soap, and all but parboiled a patient and a doctor before permitting the two to meet." During his operations on cancer patients he required that they be performed under the Lister carbolic spray. In addition to his unremitting attention to surgical detail, he established standards of post-operative care which showed his deep personal interest in the welfare of his patients. Observers frequently expressed the thought that recovery of a patient was often achieved because of his concerned attendance on the patient following an operation.

It was quite natural that out of his many interests should come a dedication to research. If his internes were to become teachers themselves, they must first become students. The study of what had been written in books was not enough. The records must be accurate and they must be explicit. For one hundred years a record of every patient in The Free Hospital has been maintained. The subject of pathology at the Hospital is such an extensive one that it, too, must be reserved for later pages.

Dr. Baker, then, had in 1875 founded a free hospital, gathered about him able advisers in the medical field, solicited and obtained the help of businessmen to take care of business matters, established a Ladies' Board to collect housekeeping necessities and visit the sick, arranged for nursing care, instituted research procedures, and set up teaching arrangements for would-be-doctors. He had done all this while providing free treatment and care for poor women who otherwise would have gone without professional help, and he had done all this while at the same time he conducted his own successful and extensive practice.

As stated in the preface, it was decided to prepare a history of The Free Hospital for Women because the Hospital had completed one hundred years of life. Research about Doctor William Henry Baker prompted the thought that an equally suitable centennial work might have been a biography of Dr. Baker himself. On second thought, however, other biographies of other extraordinary leaders who came after him would have been required, and that would not have been feasible. It is impossible to give all the evidence of his greatness which lies in the old records of the Hospital and in various medical publications written during and after his lifetime.



## Chapter IV



AFTER THE first year of its existence, it became quite apparent that the Hospital had several important problems with which to deal, problems which arose mainly from success and which were to continue for many years.

So many applicants begged to be treated that in 1877 it was found necessary to move to more commodious quarters at 60 East Springfield Street where eight beds could be set up instead of the original five. The acquisition was made in time to hold the second annual meeting there. The secretary of the Board of Trustees records in the minutes of that meeting that the Rev. A. G. Gordon opened the meeting with prayer and then addressed the Society "with special reference to the Christian aspect of the work of the Hospital." The entry shows that the motivating spirit of the Hospital was still a religious one. Transfer to the larger house did little to solve the growth problem. Four years after the move, the trustees appointed a committee to lease the adjoining property, number 58. This was accomplished in 1882, and the number of beds was then increased to twenty, a number not impressive in 1975, but one which was outstanding for 1882.

The Hospital continued to grow rapidly. In 1884 over one hundred patients were admitted, but this was small compared to the 2736 women treated in the out-patient department which had been established in 1879. For the first few years of the Hospital it was possible for one surgeon to do practically all the work, but the demands of the out-patient department were so great that Dr. Baker had to recruit additional physicians to deal with the many visiting patients. The Hospital



*Second home of The Free Hospital for Women  
60 East Springfield Street*

was closed every summer. One wonders what happened to the patients within its walls when closing day came each year. The records do not say. In the out-patient department, however, the demands were so great that in 1885 arrangements were made with several self-sacrificing physicians and nurses to keep going during the summer months. There are numerous entries in the records to show that consultations went well into every evening.

From the beginning, both in the Hospital and in the out-patient department, women who were suffering from cancer were admitted for surgery or treatment. What few hospitals there were for the most part declined to accept patients with the dreaded, hopeless disease. Obtaining the additional space at 58 Springfield Street enabled the Hospital to set up a cancer ward, probably the first of its kind in existence, surely the first in Boston. It must have been a source of pride to Dr. Baker that at the same trustees' meeting when he made the announcement of the new ward he was able to get the great Dr. Sims to come from New York to address the gathering.

The fame of the Hospital had so increased that a few who could have paid concealed the fact and were admitted. As mentioned before, this aroused the ire of Dr. Baker. In his 1883 report to the Society he said, "In one or two instances we have had patients who we thought were subjects of charity, but who we subsequently learned were quite able to meet the expense of all necessary treatment outside of our institution and were thus the means of keeping some poor women from necessary treatment. This is entirely wrong. We must more carefully protect ourselves. One of the most trying duties we are obliged to perform is to tell very many worthy and often most urgent cases that they must wait weeks and perhaps months before there is a vacancy." It is interesting to observe that his anger was not directed at the financial saving which some patients had unworthily made but at the help of which the poor had been deprived.

Another matter requiring attention was the incorporation of the Hospital. The trustees were advised that it was unwise to continue as a Society. The needed legal steps were taken, and the certificate of incorporation was issued by the Commonwealth on August 25, 1879. In the new corporate set-up the Board of Trustees consisted of doctors and businessmen. The clergymen were all transferred to "membership in the Corporation." It seems to be a minor problem to be mentioned in a centennial history, but the trustees did not think it unimportant. The minutes show their concern over the business of incorporating.

Dr. Baker was personally hard pressed for time in the formative years





*F. P. Vinton portrait of Dr. William Henry Baker.*

at the Hospital. One of the important objectives of forming The Free Hospital was, as already stated, to establish it as a teaching hospital. According to the Harvard Medical School Alumni Directory he was the first to begin the clinical teaching of gynecology at Harvard. Most of the Medical School's teaching in that field took place at the Hospital. In 1882 Dr. Baker was made Professor of Gynecology, an appointment in which, according to Dr. Graves, he took a greater personal pride than in any other achievement of his life. Later he gave to the Hospital the portrait of himself by F. P. Vinton which hangs in the reception rooms. He is shown wearing his academic robes.

Parenthetically it might be pointed out here that the painting portrays a man of forceful character, but it also portrays the other qualities mentioned by *The New York Journal of Gynecology and Obstetrics* in June, 1892, when it speaks of him as a man of unflinching courtesy and kindness of manner. The article concludes with the sentence, "It required no small amount of courage, energy, and clear-headedness to undertake the founding of a new hospital after one year of practice."

The time consumed by his teaching work was not his only problem as to the number of hours in the day. Dr. Graves, speaking at the fiftieth anniversary of the Hospital said: "In order to illustrate the unyielding courage of Dr. Baker's character I need cite only a single incident which at the time threatened not only the reputation of the Hospital, but even the very progress of abdominal surgery. I refer to the famous lawsuit in which a patient whose life Dr. Baker had saved by the removal of a large tumor sued the Hospital and its surgeon for malpractice, although she had previously subscribed her consent to the operation. Instead of submitting to the customary settlement out of court, Dr. Baker contested the suit. During four years the case went through four successive trials, the first three of which resulted in disagreement of the jury. The suit acquired wide publicity. At the fourth trial Dr. Baker was completely vindicated."

*The Boston Journal* editorially commented, "*The Journal* extends its congratulations to the defendant that he has at length secured this personal vindication. We congratulate and thank him in a larger sense, that loyal to his profession, conscious of his rectitude, tenacious of his rights, he has resisted all inducements to compromise the affair by settlement and met the issue squarely and fearlessly as often as his adversary, longing for lucre, chose to raise it." The case ran from 1883 to 1888, an extremely busy period for the doctor. It is a matter for conjecture as to how he allotted his time so that he could carry on.

The details that required decision were numerous. He got the Board



to authorize him to expend "not exceeding \$50.00 for preparing a certificate to be given to surgeons who have faithfully given their services to the Hospital for one year." In another instance he obtained authorization "to employ any necessary assistance in the carrying of patients up and down stairs." By 1891 he was able to obtain the services of a matron at \$40.00 per month and of a head nurse for a like sum. Big problems and little problems, he seemed to handle them all with equanimity.

Dr. Baker in a future year was to give this description of the beginnings: "Those early days in our history were full of struggles, sacrifices, and hard work. Yet from the exercise of the necessary qualities there developed devotion and unity in our action which provided the best possible preparation for the second period in our history, namely, our establishment in our present buildings."

The space problem at The Free Hospital continued to be ever-present. In 1881 the first mention of a building fund appeared in the records. Three years later the Trustees reported that they were still trying to increase the fund. By 1887 some generous contributions and bequests were received which warranted the drawing up of a rough plan for a new building. In 1889 Wentworth and Wheelwright were engaged as architects, and they drew up more formal plans. Finally a committee was selected to obtain a site for a new building.

It was at this point that Dr. Baker made one of his radical suggestions. He proposed that the new hospital should be out in Brookline, a place referred to by some as "a wilderness." This, of course, was an exaggerated appellation, although only a few years before, in 1882, a new club had been founded in that suburb and it was given the name of The Country Club because it was so far removed from the city. The Doctor's suggestion that the new hospital should be in Brookline violated the established custom of the day which decreed that public hospitals should be in the crowded districts of the city. He finally overcame considerable opposition by his arguments in favor of the health-giving qualities of a site far removed from the noise and unclean atmosphere of the crowded city. He answered the objection that the patients and their friends would be unable to reach the remote location by saying that he would arrange for horse and carriage transportation to the nearest electric cars.

Whatever the arguments, Dr. Baker had his way, and the trustees in June of 1889 authorized the new-building committee to look for a lot of land in the vicinity of the Chestnut Hill Reservoir, adjacent to present-day Cleveland Circle on the Boston-Brookline line. In March

of 1890 the committee came back with the report that they had not found property in the area named, but they had found "a desirable lot in Brookline containing about forty-nine thousand square feet, extending about 300 feet on Marion Street and 160 feet on Park Street, the easterly end bounding on a school-house lot." The committee was authorized to offer seventy-five cents per square foot and pay a one per cent commission to the broker. The purchase of the lot was not consummated until October 31, 1890 when the property was acquired for \$37,895.88.

The Secretary in his report to the annual meeting that same month exhibited restrained jubilation that at long last there would be adequate quarters not only for the Hospital and its patients but for the outpatient department which was forcing a heavy load on the attending physicians. At the meeting there was exhibited an elevation of the proposed new structure.

Both the jubilation and the elevation proved premature. The corner of Marion and Park Streets in Brookline was far from deserving the name of "wilderness." It was surrounded by the homes of well-to-do people who did not care for the proposed invasion of their residential privacy by the construction of a hospital. Remonstrance was so vigorous that approval of a building license was not forthcoming from the town. (History plays amusing tricks. Eighty years later a permit was issued for a hospital at that same corner, and a small hospital stands there today.)

A special committee was appointed to confer with the neighbors, but the committee had no success and the Hospital had to look elsewhere. Eventually a lot of land containing almost ninety-four thousand square feet was found in Brookline, bounded by Pond Avenue, Cumberland Avenue, Glen Road, and Highland Road. This new site was, and still is, one of the most pleasant in the town of Brookline situated on the edge of the famous Green Belt planned by Frederick Law Olmsted. The land slopes down to Muddy River, a slowly moving stream which has cost the lives of many of the town's children who had too much confidence in its treacherous ice.

It was hoped that an exchange of the Marion and Park St. lot for the new lot could be effected without additional investment. However, the exchange could not be made on the basis of a "swap." The Hospital sold the first property for \$40,000. and purchased the proposed land for \$50,000. as separate transactions. This time the committee made sure it would get the Selectmen's approval before it handed over the purchase price.

An intriguing sidelight, reminiscent of the ludicrous quarrels of editors Pott and Slurk in *Pickwick Papers*, appears in *The Brookline Chronicle* for Saturday, November 28, 1891. *The Chronicle* smugly commences its article on the Selectmen's hearing as follows, "*The Chronicle* has often called attention to the inaccuracy of reports in the Boston papers. The following from *The Boston Transcript* of November 24 is a conspicuous illustration of one of the latest instances." The item continues with the *Transcript's* recital of vigorous opposition at the hearing to the Hospital's request. "The fact is," says *The Chronicle*, "that no one appeared at the hearing to oppose the location, while those present were all agreed that the location was a suitable one, and the Selectmen unanimously voted to grant the permit for the location as asked for."

It will be noted from the date of the hearing late in 1891 that there had been a long delay in getting the project of a new building underway. New plans had to be drawn, and new efforts to raise money had to be initiated. The Board of Trustees had to abandon the policy of not spending until the money was in hand; a mortgage of \$25,000.00 was arranged. The Board of Lady Visitors stepped up their money-raising efforts. This was not a new situation for the ladies. They were quite used to being called on to "rally round." Every year they ran a "Donation Day" and thereby obtained gifts of vegetables, canned fruit, towels, linen and money. Many of the gifts came from Greater Boston's business establishments.

On July 13, 1892 the Trustees authorized construction of a new building to cost \$55,000.00 after prudently giving the building committee power to sell any gravel that might be excavated when the foundation was being built. Finally, at the year-end, the cornerstone was laid and construction commenced. But it was to be over a year before the new quarters were ready.

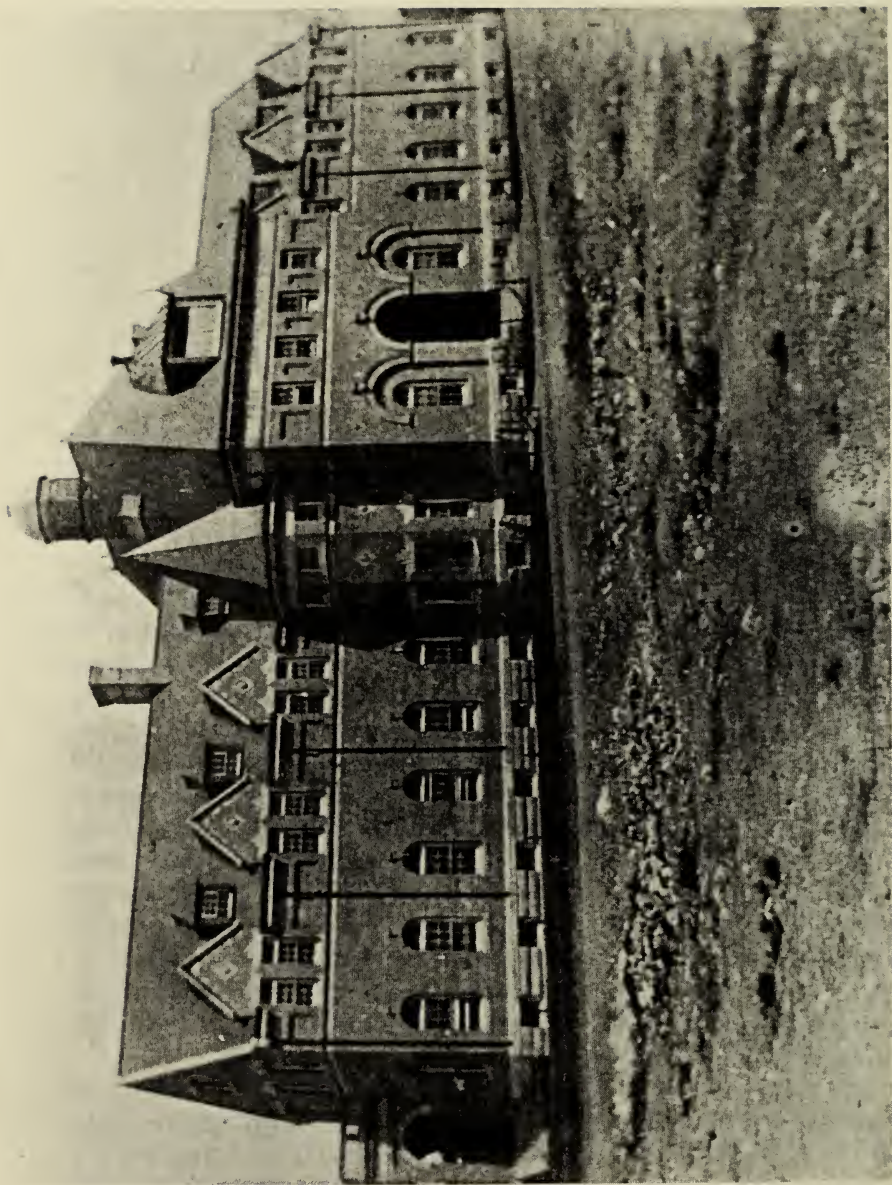
# Chapter V



WITH THE opening of the new building on Tuesday, January 1, 1895, The Free Hospital for Women came of age. The dedication ceremonies held on the afternoon of New Year's Day were well-covered by the press. Rev. Edward Everett Hale, now seventy-two years old, made a speech which gave some of the Hospital's early history, and then ventured the opinion that the new rooms were so good that one might almost wish to be sick in order to have the opportunity to enjoy them. Dr. Baker also reviewed the history of the Hospital, but the major emphasis of his speech was on the present and the future. While he offered acknowledgement to many who had labored in the past, he stressed the great changes being wrought by the adoption of principles of asepsis in gynecological surgery and the consequent far greater safety and speedier relief for the patient who had been operated on. He commented on the number of young men who had been trained in the Hospital as surgeons and who were doing excellent work in many cities across the country. "We are united," he said, "in carrying on this great work of relieving the suffering of the sick, extending hope and courage to the needy, and so fulfilling this great and Christly purpose of life."

The president of the Corporation, Mr. George Dexter, covered the practical aspects of the situation. After giving Dr. Baker full credit for the achievement of having a new building, Mr. Dexter congratulated the ladies for having put the rooms in order for occupation. He then regretfully announced that no more than half the Hospital had been finished. However, it was a matter for self-congratulation, he thought,





*Brookline home of The Free Hospital for Women  
Photo taken on opening day, January 1, 1895 Brookline, Massachusetts*



that there had been built up an endowment fund of \$75,000.00, even after paying for the land and two-thirds of the building cost to date. It was his hope that in the next twelve years the debt could be paid off and the building finished, equipped for fifty beds. The record was to show that these desired ends could be reached well ahead of that time.

Finally, the Rev. Reuen Thomas, pastor of Harvard Church on Marion Street in Brookline, spoke to the meeting. He was famous not only for excellent preaching, but also for his whimsical English humor. He began by referring to the failure of the Hospital to obtain permission to put its new building on Marion Street. "I did not know," he said, "how your president would feel in regard to myself and some others in my parish inasmuch as I believe originally the site for this building was not the present one—that it was intended that the building should be very close to Harvard Church of which I am the minister, and that somehow or other there was a sort of rebellion and consequently the building was removed from that site to this." "But," said Dr. Thomas, "this new location is better than the one first proposed, and so there has been a gain." It was his further opinion that the move from the city showed a great deal of wisdom, judgment, and kindness to the sick people in bringing them to Brookline "since it was well known that the death rate in Brookline was much lower than that of Boston." The report of the proceedings does not say how well the tongue-in-cheek humor was received.

One reporter who described the ceremonies also described the setting. "The building stands on a very beautiful spot at one side of the Riverdale Parkway on elevated ground and has a fine view of the lake, the lovely drives, and the wooded hills surrounding it." It appeared that at last everyone agreed with the wisdom of Dr. Baker's idea that the Hospital should be in the country.

The grounds about the building were unfinished and remained so until October 1895 when "Mr." Charles S. Sargent of Brookline, as the Secretary's minutes designate that world-famous professor, offered to care for the trees and plant shrubs in the Hospital grounds.

So "the greatest event in the history of the Hospital" had taken place and now it was time to settle in. The yellow brick building, designed by Shaw and Hunnewell, had on the first floor a matron's room, a dining room for nurses and patients, a bright and sunny ten-bed ward, and a sitting room for patients. There were wide porches on each side of the building, facing the views of the river and the parks. On the second floor was Dr. Baker's office, a room for the head nurse, the annual ward of six beds, and nurses' rooms. The annual ward got its



*Shaw & Hummelwell photograph from the American Architect and Building News No. 1037 November 9, 1895.*

name from the fact that it was maintained by annual contributions from supporting churches. There were two unfinished wards on this floor. The third floor had the "etherizing rooms" and rooms where patients could recover from the effects of ether. Here also was the operating room. The unfortunate members of the house-keeping staff were assigned space in the unfinished attic. In the basement were the laundry, the kitchen, and the boiler room. The building had an elevator which in future years would cause much financial distress since it and the heating plant seemed to require frequent maintenance and repair.

There was no electricity and there was no telephone. An early posed photograph shows nurses holding candles to furnish light during a minor nursing procedure. As to the telephone, in an emergency someone went to a kindly neighbor who had a telephone which could be used to call the Visiting Surgeon.

A prominent feature of the sunny ward was a large fireplace over which hung a red-stone bas-relief five feet in diameter. It depicted the Biblical scene in which the ailing woman is in the act of touching Jesus' robe and is saying, "If I may but touch the hem of his garment, I shall be whole." The medallion was given by Dr. Baker's mother who unfortunately had not lived to see it put in place. Dr. Baker said later that he had selected the scene himself, and he commented in true clinical fashion that he was "sure the woman Jesus healed had a fibroid as the story says she had an issue of blood for seven years. If it had been a cancer she would have died before." The sculpture still hangs today over the bricked up fireplace in the records room of the Hospital where once the first ward was located. Eventually the medallion was incorporated in the Hospital's corporate seal.

The transfer of the Hospital from the East Springfield Street quarters took place in the early days of January, 1895. There were no furnished rooms for the out-patient department so it had to remain where it was in the basement of 60 East Springfield Street, at the corner of Harrison Avenue. The move to Brookline took place under the supervision of Miss Emily Turner, the matron, and Miss McNaughton, the head nurse. There were at the time eight nurses on the staff. It should be noted that the very practical Ladies' Board took care of one bothersome problem. The minutes of their meeting on November 6, 1894 show that "arrangements had been made with Mr. Quinlan, Livery-stable keeper, to provide tickets at fifteen cents apiece for carriage transfer from the electric cars to the new hospital building."

The increased burdens created by the new establishment forced Dr. Baker to give up his professorship at Harvard Medical School. How-







ever he did not let the turmoil of the change of location interfere with his look to the future. In the first month at Brookline he took a step whose importance he could hardly have realized: he employed Miss Hannah Jane Ewin to direct the nurses' school which he had just created. She was to be an important part of the Hospital's later development.

Miss Ewin was a graduate of the Anna Jaques Hospital in her home town of Newburyport, Mass. and of the post-graduate school of the General Memorial Hospital in New York City. Her life's work was to be at The Free Hospital for Women. The school which she took under her charge was originally intended to give a nine months' course to women who would probably have had little or no previous training, although preference would be given to graduates of other training schools if they cared to apply. The first class of nine graduated in September of 1895. At this point Miss Ewin made a radical change. The length of the course was changed to four and a half months and the students would have to be graduates of a training school at some other hospital. It had been found that trying to educate those with previous training and those with none did not work. In the new procedure, nurses would be given practical work in the operating room and in the out-patient department. They would be examined on the results of their study. The change in the school produced immediate success as a large number of graduates from other training schools applied for admission, and shortly the governing authorities of the Hospital were congratulating themselves on the high quality of Miss Ewin's graduates.

The new building solved one minor problem which had been on the troublesome side. Where would the annual meetings of the Hospital take place? In the past they must have been held in Dr. Baker's office or at some hotel or even at East Springfield Street. But now there was no question. The annual meeting of October 31, 1895 was held in the new building. Dr. Baker surely must have been a proud man that day.

Whether it was by means of further gifts and bequests or by means of more money-raising activities by the Ladies' Board, a new ward called "The Recovery Ward" was opened on the first floor of the hitherto empty east wing on Saturday, February 22, 1896. It had been planned to have an open ward, but Dr. Baker told the people present at the dedication ceremonies that it had been found objectionable to introduce into an open ward women who were in great suffering just after an operation. The area had therefore been divided into ten sound-proof rooms for the reception of patients after operations. This humane



September, 1895. Miss Hannah Jane Erwin and the first class in post-graduate training school. Left to right, front row: Misses McLeod, Marvin, Conlin, Kerr; rear: Misses Smith, Mills, McNaughton, Lonmergan and Durgin.



innovation by Dr. Baker was later to be copied in many other hospitals.

It was probably at this time that the Hospital at last had electricity installed. The item of expenditure for electricity appears for the first time in the treasurer's 1896 report. There is also a record in the minutely detailed lists of gifts and givers for that year of the names of ladies who contributed cash at Miss Ewin's solicitation "for electric light and fixtures." There was still no mention of a telephone. The earliest reference to a telephone was noted in a Trustee's vote on June 21, 1900 when "it was voted that a new telephone closet be built under the supervision of Dr. Baker." The heating system kept creating difficulties, and the Trustees on April 30, 1896 appropriated \$1,000.00 "to improve the present heating apparatus and to employ an expert to ascertain what is the best way to do it." It does not take much imagination even now to hear the vigorous comments the Trustees must have made about the faults of a heating system not yet two years old.

In 1896 a substantial gift from Mrs. Herbert Dumaesq and Mrs. Arthur W. Foster, in memory of their father, Eben Jordan, Boston's famous merchant, permitted the establishment of the Jordan Ward devoted to the treatment of patients suffering from "cancer and other aseptic diseases." The two sisters paid not only the cost of setting up the ward, but endowed it in 1897 with a check for \$15,000.00. The Free Hospital for Women, which had long been active in the work of treating cancer, became one of the country's leading institutions engaged in that work. One of the very early X-ray machines to be used in cancer cases was set up at the Hospital later on in 1902.

Important events kept occurring in the life of the Hospital, which, though it had come of age, was rapidly moving forward and growing into a position of greater and greater significance. On June 18, 1900, the out-patient department which had long outgrown its East Springfield Street location was moved to 633 Massachusetts Avenue in Boston. A good idea of the value of the department to the sick of Boston and other communities is given in the statistic of over one hundred thousand women who had been treated in the department's first twenty-five years. Yet, as Dr. Baker said, the Hospital in the out-patient and in-patient departments was "never able to accept more than a moiety of those who asked its aid." It is impossible to avoid the question, "What did this multitude of poor women do before there was a Free Hospital?"

The next major step was the establishment of the pathological laboratory. This truly marked a milestone in the progress of the Hospital and more importantly in the field of general medicine. The gynecological work in pathology had previously been conducted primarily as a

function of the Harvard Medical School, although most of its work had been done at East Springfield Street. Now the Hospital's department was to assume a stature of its own. On November 8, 1891, the Trustees voted "that whereas in the present state of medical progress we realize the necessity of adding to our Hospital a thoroughly equipped scientific laboratory where work in scientific investigations and original research may be conducted; and whereas it is to be hoped that the greatest good to suffering humanity may result from the co-operative work of said laboratory and the clinical wards of our Hospital, and whereas it is therefore the request of Dr. Baker, the Visiting Surgeon, there be created to assist in the carrying out of the aforesaid needs of our institution the position of Junior Visiting Surgeon, the said position is hereby created." The next Trustee's Meeting on December 5th voted to change the word "Junior" to "Associate," and Dr. Edward Reynolds was elected Associate Visiting Surgeon. Apparently, he did not care for the title of "Junior." (His name should not be confused with that of Dr. J. P. Reynolds who had been on the staff for many years).

Dr. Reynolds appeared before the Trustees on December 16 and presented his thoughts and plans for the new laboratory. The clerk had some difficulty with the spelling of the word "laboratory." Dr. Reynolds' success in getting an initial appropriation of \$1,000.00 was partly due to the fact that the final payment of \$5,000.00 on the mortgage had been made the previous May.

On March 20, 1902, Dr. Reynolds obtained approval to employ Dr. William P. Graves as Resident Pathologist at a salary of \$500.00 per annum. He had become associated with Dr. Brooks the previous year. Again the Hospital had acquired, at a highly important point in its progress, the services of an extraordinary man. No one could then have appreciated just how extraordinary he was. The Hospital sent him to "Baltimore, Buffalo, and other medical centers for six months' study of special gynecological pathology, urinology, etc.," as the records say. He returned to find that a small pathological laboratory had been set up in an alcove in an unfinished portion of the first floor at the end of the north ward. There he began the work which was to furnish the surgeons with prompt and accurate diagnosis by examination of surgical specimens even while an operation was in progress. The physicians were greatly helped by the existence of records of patients. The records have been completely maintained down to the present. Miss Di Pietro, supervisor of the volumes and cabinets which today are located in the room where the medallion given by Mrs. Harriette Baker



is hanging makes the statement that the record of every patient ever to visit the hospital, in either the in-patient or the out-patient department, is still available.

Dr. Reynolds in November of 1902 was advanced to the position of Visiting Surgeon, being given equal status with Dr. Baker, on paper at least. Jointly they undertook the Hospital's first fund drive, a campaign which sought to raise \$250,000.00. Several factors had produced the need for funds. One was the new laboratory, but more important was the cost of caring for more and more patients. As against sixty-five patients treated in its first year, the Hospital cared for two hundred and sixty-nine in its twenty-fifth. The campaign material stresses that "no charges of any kind for any purpose" were made. It also proudly emphasized the training programs. "Through the practitioners whom it graduates from its house service as trained gynecologists, through the many young men who have been made experts by positions on its junior staff, and the specially trained nurses who issue from the training school, it is of benefit to every class in the community."

The fund drive was sufficiently successful for the Hospital early in 1903 to purchase 34,000 square feet of land on the westerly side of Glen Road for \$11,900.00. It was proposed to construct there a building to house a scientific laboratory, rooms for the nurses, a laundry, and a "place for coal"; certainly an odd combination. There were various delays, and finally contracts were let in the summer of 1905 to construct for \$17,197.00 a building described merely as "the Laundry Building."

All was not going well at this point. On November 10, 1905, Dr. Edward Reynolds presented to the Trustees in writing a "remonstrance against the present management of affairs at the Hospital." A week later the Trustees met again to hear another statement by Dr. Reynolds and this time a statement by Dr. Baker, both statements being in writing. The Trustees appointed a committee of three physicians and two trustees to read over the statements and "report to this Board their conclusions as to the professional charges made and the cases cited and as to the professional fitness of Dr. Baker and Dr. Reynolds as operating surgeons for the class of work done at this Hospital." If the statements of the two clashing physicians could be found they would make interesting reading.

Although the record does not say so, the decision must have gone against Dr. Reynolds. Without any official vote of the Trustees, Dr. Reynolds resigned all connection with the Hospital, and five trustees resigned at the same time. The records disclose no more information. Even the minutes book of medical staff meetings is silent. It is impossible

at this distance in time to determine what the disagreement was all about. It was a disturbing confrontation, the only one appearing in the Hospital records.

## Chapter VI



PHILOSOPHERS, sociologists, and psychologists have at various times attempted to answer the question as to whether the situation develops the man or the man develops the situation. Most have cautiously settled for Sir Roger de Coverley's dictum on another matter: "Much may be said on both sides." Whatever the basis, Dr. William Phillips Graves at this juncture in the Hospital's history became its head. Both he and the Hospital which he directed for twenty-six years experienced a growth in effectiveness and importance which was striking indeed.

William P. Graves was born in Andover, Mass. on January 29, 1870, the son of William Blair Graves and Lurannah Copeland Graves. His father was head of the science department at Phillips Andover Academy so it was natural that he should receive his preparatory school education there. During his Andover days he won prizes in Latin and Greek. He went next to Yale where he again showed scholastic ability of a high order, although he was probably better known among Yale alumni for his athletic achievements. He was a member of the famous Pa Corbin's football team which in thirteen games in 1888 scored 698 points to none for its opponents. The team with such names on its roster as Pudge Hefflefinger, Lee McClung, and Alonzo Stagg was probably Yale's greatest in the old days of football. "Billy" Graves appeared in the program as left halfback, weighing 154 pounds and standing five feet nine and a half inches high.

The football games of that day were far from child's play. Describing the game with Princeton on November 25, 1888 the reporter from the

*New Haven Union* wrote, "In less than fifteen minutes their jackets were frescoed with blood. Stagg's and McClung's faces were decorated with gore and Ames looked as though a brick house had fallen on him. Neither team was gentle in play, and they rejoiced in driving their opponents' noses as far into the mud as possible." The *New Haven Register* gave an equally graphic description. "Both teams got in some quite respectable slugging when they were sure the umpire was not looking, and the man who did not have a bloody nose and mouth was considered a little out of fashion."

The *New York Tribune* was a little more appreciative of the finer points when it wrote, "Then Graves, a silent, light-haired, slim fellow sped like a race-horse around Princeton's end rusher. Speer wound his arms around Graves' neck but the Yale man twisted like an eel on legs. He was like the Irishman's flea: where was he? On the ground, no doubt, under a mass of orange and black humanity—but just where? Nobody knew until Graves stopped squirming."

It will never be known how well Harvard might have fared with that awesome team as the faculty at Cambridge refused to let its players take the field against them.

At Yale, Graves had also played baseball, a less violent sport, and he had been editor-in-chief of the *Yale Record*. Following graduation in 1891, he took a position as a teacher and general athletics director at Hill School in Pottstown, Pennsylvania, where he was eventually offered the vice-principalship. However, he decided instead to attend Harvard Medical School from which he graduated summa cum laude at the head of his class in 1899. He followed up with several months of study in Vienna. On October 10, 1900, he married Miss Alice M. Chase of Boston. As already stated, in the following year he became associated with Dr. William Henry Baker, a fortuitous occurrence.

Much of his study in Vienna had been under Professor Storck, a leader in the field of pathology, so that Graves was an obvious selection to conduct the new pathological laboratory at The Free Hospital for Women. When Dr. Reynolds departed, the mantle of successorship to Dr. Baker fell upon Dr. Graves' shoulders. He was appointed First Assistant Surgeon, a title which he kept for two years. Officially he did not become head of the Hospital until June of 1908 when Dr. Baker gave up his active duties and Dr. Graves was appointed Visiting Surgeon to succeed him. The year before, Dr. Baker had ceased to be a member of the Board of Trustees, so it was evident then that he was getting ready to turn over the chief executive position to Dr. Graves who had been carrying on the management of the Hospital with Dr.



W. H. BAKER, M. D.

20 MT. VERNON STREET  
BOSTON, MASS.

OFFICE HOURS  
MONDAY, WEDNESDAY  
AND FRIDAY, 11-1

Dr. W. P. Graves,

244 Marlborough St.

Boston, Mass.

Dear Dr. Graves,

Thank you very much for the honor you do me in your letter of the 12th. I shall be most happy to give the diplomas to the graduating class of nurses on Friday the 28th. at 2.30 P.M.

The good health and spirits of which you write were largely due to your presence which I find necessary to have from time to time to keep up the good feeling.

Yours sincerely,

*W. H. Baker*

Mar. 14, 1913.

Baker looking over his shoulder. Dr. Baker was appointed Surgeon Emeritus and was entitled, under the appointment, to be called into consultation or to operate in any surgical case at the request of the Visiting Surgeon.

It is interesting to observe how well these two strong-minded men worked together. There is in the Hospital files a note from the older man to the younger on March 14, 1913 in which he agrees to give the diplomas to the graduating nurses. Dr. Baker's concluding sentence needs no amplification. "The good health and spirits of which you write were largely due to your presence which I find necessary to have from time to time to keep up the good feeling."

The man who had taken the measure of the Princeton football team was quick to go into action against the problems of the Free Hospital. The "Laundry Building" had been completed and now Dr. Graves was able to transfer the pathological laboratory there. A subway connected it to the main building. In 1908, the Nurses Home, built of yellow brick, was constructed under an appropriation of \$60,000.00. That year also it was voted to finish the East Wing, and in July the out-patient department was at long last transferred to the Hospital, the old lease at East Springfield Street being terminated. The basement of the Nurses Home was fitted up to receive the over-worked department, and the Ladies' Board again raised the money to provide transportation from the electric car line.

The construction of the Nurses Home, the finishing of the East Wing, and the establishment of the new laboratory brought the inevitable criticism that the management was being extravagant. Dr. Graves, in a speech to the Ladies' Board at Trinity Chapel on April 6, 1909, answered the charge in vigorous terms, and at the same time gave his philosophy on the objectives of the Hospital. "Why have we attempted to expand at all?" he asked. "Was not the Hospital sufficiently elaborate before? Why are we not satisfied to go along as we were? In answer to these questions it must be said that the career of any successful hospital must necessarily be one of continued progress and expansion. Hospitals are the chief exponents of medical and surgical science. Any hospital which pretends to stand for scientific, first-class, up-to-date treatment of its patients must be constantly growing or else fall behind and rapidly lose its usefulness."

After paying tribute to Dr. Baker's unflagging spirit of progress, he became very specific about the situation, stating that the Hospital was at a critical point in its history. "For the past twenty-five or thirty years,"

he said, "the Hospital has worked in comparative obscurity; the organization has been informal, perhaps in some ways primitive, intensely personal, and almost a private enterprise. But it has developed in such a way that it can no longer retain its character of a personal, private enterprise; it has become and must continue to be a prominent public institution."

He introduced the subject of Harvard Medical School which he said had adopted The Free Hospital for Women as one of the institutions for the teaching of Gynecology. He stated that Harvard was expecting more from The Free Hospital than from any other hospital in respect to development of the science of surgery in gynecology and also in the laboratory investigation of causes and processes of women's diseases. The School further expected modern and effective instruction of medical students. Not only Harvard but hospitals and physicians of Boston were demanding much of The Free Hospital because of the belief that many special operations on women could be better done there.

Dr. Graves felt sure that the Ladies' Board would well appreciate the enormous increase of applications for treatment which had taken place. The waiting list was constantly in the neighborhood of two hundred, a staggering figure in view of the Hospital's ability to take care of only three hundred and twenty-five cases a year.

As to the expenditure for the Nurses Home, he really became indignant. "Most of you," he said, "will remember the almost absurd provision made for their (the nurses') comfort in the small, dark, poorly ventilated cubicles on the third floor of the main building, with no possible chance for privacy or recreation." After enlarging on that phase of the problem, he told the ladies that the limited number of rooms, poor as they were, prevented addition to the nursing staff as there was not even a room where one more nurse might sleep.

Concerning finishing the ward, he came out strongly for more beds. The unfinished wing had been built originally to take care of growth, and the growth had come. He regretted that money-raising efforts had been inadequate to date but was entirely confident that the money would be found. He spoke better than he knew for one of the women in his audience came forward afterward with the necessary funds. The main thing, he felt, was that the Hospital's capacity had been increased to fifty-four beds.

Pathologist that he was, he was most emphatic about the expense incurred for the finishing and maintenance of the laboratory as an



integral and indispensable aid to the scientific treatment of patients. "We needed a new laboratory, we had to have it. If so, was it not the part of wisdom to have a good one?"

His last paragraph contains a sentence which clearly shows his forward-looking philosophy. "We are now equipped to qualify as a first-class institution and take a foremost position in the country as a Gynecological Center; a year ago, we were not."

At their next meeting, the Ladies' Board voted Dr. Graves their thanks for his "most interesting, illuminating, and stimulating address." Others must also have accepted his pronouncements since there is no further record of criticism.

On June 25, 1909, the Trustees officially expressed their willingness to affiliate with the Harvard Medical School "if it so desires." Apparently it so desired since two years later the President was authorized to communicate with Doctor John Collins Warren to express the sentiment that they were in favor of having the School and Hospital unite with the purpose of advancing "the natural interests" of both institutions. In 1909 discussions began as to the advisability of keeping the Hospital open during the summer months. Change was in the air.

In 1910 a drive was started to raise funds with which to build an addition containing two new operating rooms, and on August 2, 1911 bids were opened and work commenced. The addition, which had cost \$27,243.19, was dedicated on May 6, 1912. *The Boston Transcript* reported that A. Lawrence Lowell, President of Harvard, was among the speakers, indicating Harvard's growing interest in the Hospital. Dr. Baker also made a brief speech and, commenting on the Harvard connection, emphasized that the Hospital had always been a learning institution. No doubt the strong relationship between the School and Hospital had been further added to by the appointment in 1911 of Dr. Graves to the Chair of Gynecology previously held by Dr. Baker.

An entertaining reversal of history occurred in that year of 1912. This time the Hospital was the objector to someone's real estate aspirations. On February 1st, the Trustees voted to have "the secretary write to the Selectmen and Park Commissioners of Brookline objecting to the purchase by the Town of the School of Technology Athletic Field near the Hospital." As in 1891 at Marion Street, the pleas of the Hospital were disregarded, and "Tech Field" is Brookline's athletic field today.

In the year or two following all the building and departmental expansion there seemed to come a breathing space. Problems still arose, but they were not extensive. On the plus side, Mrs. Arthur Davis gave



the Hospital a new fence, and Professor Sargent still looked after the trees and shrubs. On the outgo side, rising costs were producing rising outlays. Miss Ewin's salary was increased to \$1,200.00 a year, the permanent night nurse had an increase from \$35.00 a month to \$40.00, and even the graduate nurses were voted a stipend of \$10.00 a month. After almost yearly discussion on the subject, it was finally voted in 1912 "to extend the usefulness of the Hospital by keeping open during the summer months," a move which threw even greater burdens on the unpaid physicians who had to labor during the warm months without benefit of air-conditioning.

As previously related, Dr. Baker had retired in 1908. The Trustees at that time "acknowledged with thankful appreciation the work done by Dr. Baker in founding The Free Hospital for Women and for cherishing the good work from its organization. The Trustees wish to thank him for his many years of devotion to the work and to express the hope that his interest and help may be retained in the Hospital for many years to come."

Dr. Baker's interest and help were cut off by his death at his home in Waltham, Mass. on November 26, 1914. The extensive obituaries in the press recited his great contributions to the suffering poor. He left his widow, who had been Miss Charlotte A. Ball, daughter of one of the original trustees of Boston City Hospital, and two sons, one of whom was Dr. Harold W. Baker (on the staff of The Free Hospital).

With his going there came a brief pause in the Hospital's procedures. The Board of Trustees passed a resolution, and Dr. Graves wrote a eulogy. But the great man had made full provision for successor management. The old order had passed.



## Chapter VII



IN ALL THE rush of rapid expansion generated by the new Visiting Surgeon, it was obvious that he could not have achieved it alone. Like Dr. Baker he was able to attract and inspire able administrators. The team of Dr. Graves, Superintendent Ewin, President Fearing, and Dr. Pemberton was to work together for many years to bring the Hospital to a position of national and international greatness. Working right along with them and making major contributions were the Board of Trustees, the Ladies' Board, and the general staff.

Hannah Jane Ewin came to the Hospital to serve as head of the Nurses' School. On the same day in 1906 when Dr. Graves was appointed Assistant Visiting Surgeon and unofficial head of The Free Hospital, Miss Ewin was appointed Superintendent of Nurses, a position she was to hold for almost twenty-five years. She was possessed of extraordinary energy and resourcefulness. One who knew her well commented that "honesty of purpose and loyalty were the things that counted most with her." Photographs seem to portray in her face a stern and commanding presence. This was but a facade behind which lay a keen sense of humor and a deep capacity for sympathy. She left the stamp of her fine character on many a student nurse and many a young man from the Harvard Medical School.

Some of her letters to Dr. Graves are in The Free Hospital's files. They show her strong feeling for the Hospital and her great respect for Dr. Graves, but they also show quite a bit more. Two of the letters are from Lake Saranac in New York where she had gone to be at the sanitarium with one of her assistant head nurses who was ill with



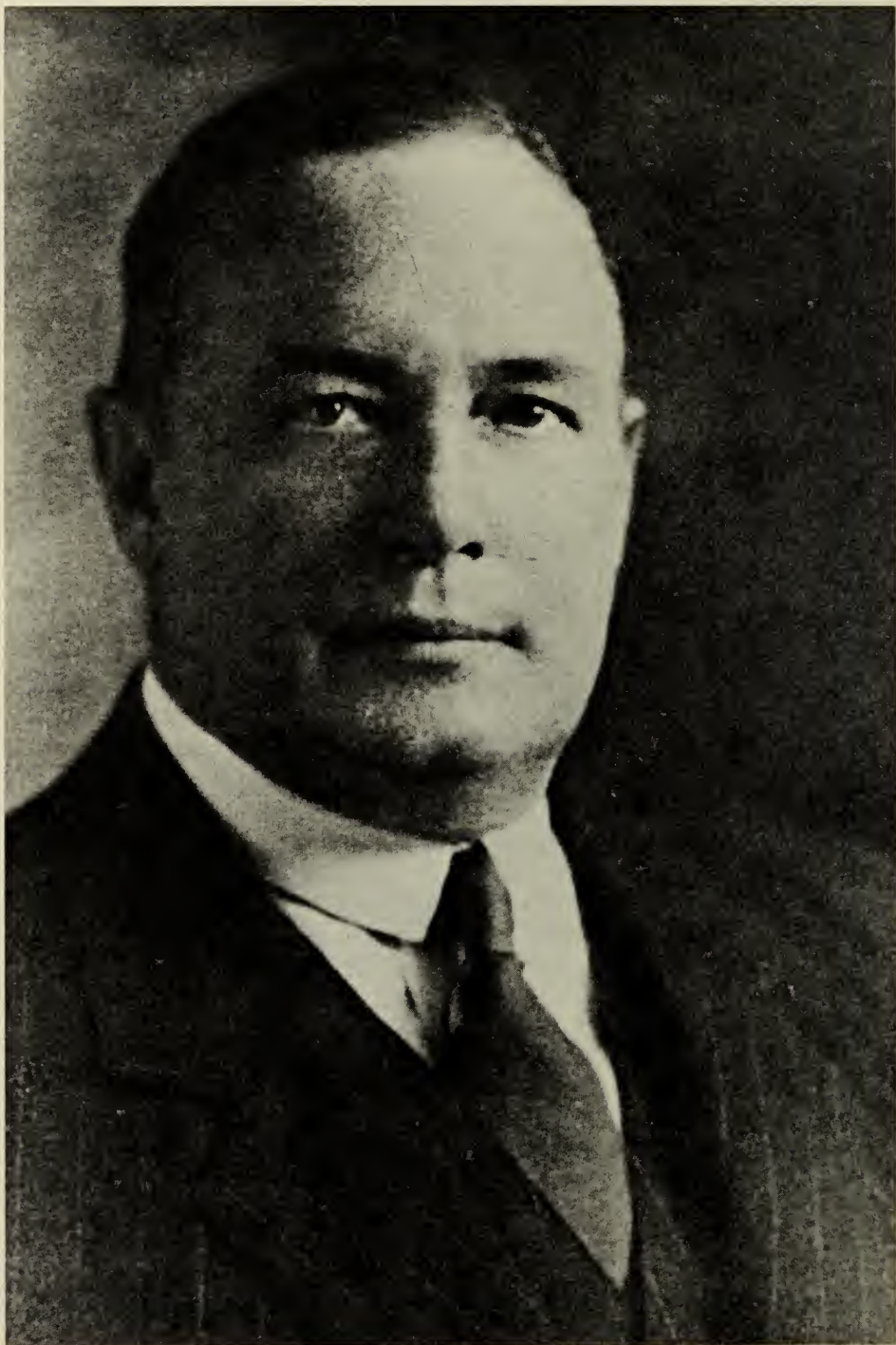
*Hannah Jane Ewin*



tuberculosis and who was also suffering from homesickness. What the letters do not mention is that Miss Ewin had given up her vacation to be with the ailing nurse.

Other letters to Dr. Graves were written while he was on vacation or on sick leave and obviously were intended to keep him abreast of doings at the Hospital. She even reported to him "a funny incident that occurred at three o'clock in the morning two days ago." A man had rung the door-bell and said he had a lame leg which he wanted one of the nurses to massage. Miss Ewin took care of the situation by sending one of the male attendants to massage his ankle and start him on his way. "He had been drinking a little but was still able to walk," she wrote. Similar minutiae are scattered through her letters. One report deals with a minor personal problem. "We are having four of the worst post-graduates that you ever saw. One of them has his office-nurse with him, who chews gum during all the clinics and during the operating. Frank (Dr. Pemberton) declares that he holds her hand all the time they are on the clinic stand. That I am not sure of, but he certainly pays more attention to her than he does to the operating."

Young Dr. Pemberton may have been "Frank" to Miss Ewin, but Dr. Graves was always "Dr. Graves." However there was a great personal respect and admiration between Miss Ewin and Dr. Graves. Had it not been for the letters we should not have known that he had asked her opinions on the manuscript and illustrations of the book he was writing on gynecology. She did not hesitate to report to him what she considered second-rate work on the part of one of the surgeons. She refers sarcastically to a diagnosis he had made of "emergency pelvic inflammation," but the resulting surgery disclosed a different situation. "We are to have a Wasserman done tomorrow," she wrote. Her comment was terse but illuminating. One of the internes of those days reported that breakfast at the Hospital with Dr. Graves and Miss Ewin was a silent, awe-inspiring affair. "To speak," he said, "would have been like setting off a firecracker in a library." Over the years these breakfasts must have been quite remarkable to have impressed themselves so vividly that discussion of The Free Hospital with any of today's doctors who were neophytes there almost always produces some anecdote about a breakfast. One surgeon mentions that a platter of five eggs was placed each morning at 6:30 A.M. before Dr. Graves. The first time the student saw it happen he thought the eggs were for the whole table; on the contrary they were just for Dr. Graves, a trencherman of parts. Still another physician in recalling his first breakfast at the Hospital says that another beginner breezed into the



*Dr. William Graves*

dining room with a boisterous greeting to all present. The chilly reaction set him back to such an extent that after Dr. Graves had left, the young man protested, "What's the matter with me? I bathe don't I?" However the students had to endure the silence for only a short while as breakfast ran from 6:30 A.M. to 7:00 A.M., and Dr. Graves operated just on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Miss Ewin must have enjoyed the reactions of her young charges. It is told as fact that one of the resident internes had suggested to a nurse on the staff that, contrary to rules, they have dinner together in the Hospital dining room on an evening when Miss Ewin was to leave early. In some fashion she learned of the plan and delayed her departure until she could march into the dining room and firmly set a bottle of wine before the couple with the remark, "See if you can handle that, John."

She was less tolerant in another instance when she discovered a budding doctor smoking a cigarette and glared at him with the order, "Young man, you may leave here and don't come back."

Dr. George V. Smith has written of her extraordinary talents in these words: "She was amazing, an unsung great. She ordered food for the Hospital, kept accounts, ran everything in the wards, gave anaesthesia, managed postoperative care, removed stitches, taught nurses, ran housekeeping and laundry, and taught students from the Harvard Medical School about anaesthesia. She could have a sharp edge to her tongue, but she could also be the sweetest and most concerned person to those in trouble."

Miss Ewin dubbed some medical men visiting from Columbus, Ohio the "Knights of Columbus," and of another visiting big-wig she wrote, "He seems to think he is a very wonderful man. I had difficulty keeping my face straight at times." One final trenchant sentence should not be omitted: "Two very miserable-looking post-graduates applied yesterday, and I referred them to the post-graduate school." Miss Ewin could be analytical and decisive in one sweep.

It would be erroneous to leave the impression that her letters consisted entirely of the pithy comments just recited. Far from it. Many paragraphs reveal her extensive medical knowledge obtained in part from assisting in operations at the Hospital, while others show her involvement in the administrative aspects of the Hospital which would not ordinarily fall to a Superintendent, and this on a salary which, as noted, by 1911 had increased to \$1,200.00 a year. Dr. Graves must have had great confidence in her abilities. Her foresight and planning made possible much of his success as head of the Hospital.

He was equally fortunate in having as President of the Hospital



Corporation George R. Fearing who had joined the Board of Trustees in 1902. He became President in 1910 and was to hold that office until 1936. Like Dr. Graves he had been a star athlete. In his career at Harvard from which he was graduated in 1893 he set a record for the high jump which stood unbroken for years. He also had been outstanding in football and rowing. He completed his courses in Harvard Law School in 1896, and the following year became the National Singles Champion in court tennis. His love of fishing took him on annual trips to Quebec. His business career was spent largely in investment banking. During World War I he served as a lieutenant commander in the Navy.

The Free Hospital was one of the chief interests of his life. Writing of him after his death in 1956, Dr. Olive W. Smith said, "As long as he was able, we could count on a visit every Tuesday afternoon. For about ten minutes he would sit on a laboratory stool pumping us for what we are aiming at and what he could do." His wisdom, humor, and generosity were the marks of a rare person. He played an outstanding part in the management of the Hospital's assets and in the development of the financial sinews wherewith the Hospital might grow to the heights toward which Dr. Graves was driving it.

With George Fearing on the Board of Trustees were many of the community's financial leaders. The minutes show that whenever a man was proposed for membership, almost invariably the invitation was accepted. Apparently it was a mark of distinction to be a member. As already stated, the Trustees were usually given the privilege of making up the deficits which seemed to be occurring annually, and they also took an active part in the money-raising activities required by Dr. Graves' expansion policies.

The Ladies' Board was carrying on its extensive good work under Dr. Graves just as it had from the beginning. Perhaps some day a philanthropist will create a memorial to that same good work by printing excerpts from the many small volumes containing the minutes of the Board's meetings. They maintained their own treasury and dutifully recorded all expenditures no matter of what nature: a wedding present for Dr. Pemberton in 1915, the cost of sending the assistant head nurse to Lake Saranac when tuberculosis struck, and the purchase of a new bed for Miss Ewin when Miss Fowle took her place for two weeks and found Miss Ewin's bed very hard and uncomfortable although Miss Ewin had never complained. The minutes make frequent references to the Annual Donation Day in the Fall when everyone interested in the Hospital, including grateful patients, arrived with quantities of fruit and vegetables from nearby farms and estates. The





*George R. Fearing*

message went out that money was acceptable also. In other money-raising efforts the Ladies, every year for a number of years, gave a Costume Ball usually netting five thousand dollars or more; and for several years they ran Theater Benefit Nights which, according to the programs, were elaborate affairs.

Their fascinating minutes were not devoted entirely to financial matters. It was the Ladies who kept urging the Trustees to keep the Hospital open during the summer, and they were successful, although they had to raise the money to do it. Various reports resulting from the visits of the Ladies to patients in the Hospital were duly entered. One visiting lady of 1916 reported to her fellow-members "the very interesting case of a woman, 65 years old, who had been successfully operated on for a tumor weighing 72 pounds. She was discharged from the Hospital entirely well. She is now beginning to walk all over again and keep her proper balance."

There are several entries to demonstrate how interested the Ladies were in the progress of the assistant head nurse who had gone to Lake Saranac. It was reported when she had left the sanitarium, and when, two years later she had a relapse. When she finally decided to go home to Nova Scotia, that was reported too. The Secretary notes that the omission of the Lord's Prayer which had previously been said at the beginning of every meeting had caused some dissatisfaction, and it was voted to resume the custom. The meetings seem to have been outside the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court.

These few comments indicate the interest which the Ladies' Board took in the Hospital. It could not have kept going without their devotion and dedication.

On October 25, 1911, Frank A. Pemberton, M.D., was elected Assistant Surgeon to outpatients. From that date until 1928 he was pathologist for the Hospital. He was born in Newton, Massachusetts in 1884. He received a B.S. degree from Harvard College in 1906 and an M.D. degree from Harvard Medical School in 1909. It was while he was a young medical student that he first came in contact with The Free Hospital for Women, doing volunteer work in which he greatly impressed Dr. Graves by his abilities, particularly by his close attention to details. After graduate study in Vienna and a houseofficership at the Massachusetts General Hospital, he was invited to return to The Free Hospital to embark on a career in gynecology.

In a very short time he became an authority on gynecological pathology, a field which had been very dear to the heart of Dr. Graves.

His extensive writings were for years the preeminent works on the subject. Personally he was of a far different makeup than either Dr. Baker or Dr. Graves. He was not possessed of their driving, robust characteristics. On the contrary, by his economy of words and his slight build, he came to be known as the Cal Coolidge of gynecology. He was to be Dr. Graves' successor.

The year 1916 was an important one for Dr. Graves. It was then that he published his chief contribution to medical literature, a volume entitled *Gynecology*. It became almost at once the standard work on the subject; at the time of his death in 1933 he was working on a fifth edition. In his book he demonstrated unusual abilities as an author, not only in his clarity of expression, but in his skill as an artist. His "beautiful illustrations," as one critic styled them, even brought encomiums from Miss Ewin who was not given to many expressions of enthusiasm. By way of a human interest note, it should be reported that later on he was to give a lecture on the techniques of the game of golf, and again, he illustrated the lecture with many fine drawings. He had the gift of bilateral artistry; that is, he could draw with both hands simultaneously.

The year 1916 was important for still another reason. Mme. Curie six years earlier had first produced the pure element, radium, which she and her husband had discovered in 1896. The Free Hospital was among the first hospitals in the world to apply the strange element to the treatment and cure of cancer. Dr. Graves and Dr. Pemberton were true pioneers in this important process. They were able to obtain from the Board of Trustees on October 19, 1916 an appropriation of \$10,000.00 "for use in cancer cases." The two physicians were quick to share with the profession the results of their use of radium from both the surgical and pathological points of view. The Free Hospital for Women achieved another step up the road to international recognition.

The coming of World War I in Europe in 1914 had little effect at first on the Hospital's progress. With further expansion in mind Dr. Graves in May of 1916 got approval of the Trustees to purchase a large lot of land at the corner of Glen Road and Cumberland Ave. opposite the Hospital buildings. But shortly thereafter the pressures of war began to be felt, and money raising became so difficult that expansion plans had to be dropped.

On April 3, 1917, it was reported to the Ladies' Board that the nurses were dissatisfied because they were not doing patriotic work. The Board responded by voting to ask the Trustees whether the



Hospital could not be enrolled in some suitable way to meet a national emergency. Three days later the Trustees had no need to take special action. The United States had entered the war, and the national emergency had arrived.

Expansion of the Hospital plant almost ceased. Other problems arose which consumed everyone's energies. Many doctors and nurses enlisted for service at home and abroad. Dr. Graves went to Halifax in Nova Scotia to assist in restoring the health of that city after the disastrous munitions ship explosion of December 6, 1917. In the following month the Trustees were told that of the sixty-three beds in the Hospital only forty-five beds were in use because of lack of funds, a campaign for new money having been unsuccessful. The campaign, as a matter of fact, had been called off almost as soon as it started with only \$45,000.00 in hand. It was then proposed that the Hospital be prepared to increase the number of admissions of women from other hospitals if those other hospitals became overcrowded. This would have meant admission of paying patients for the first time. Nothing seems to have come of the proposal, and the Hospital struggled on.

Inflation caused many difficulties. The salary of Miss Ewin was raised to \$1,800.00 a year; student nurses received an increase from \$10.00 to \$25.00 a month. The Trustees appropriated \$300.00 to fit up a rest room for the nurses, but the nurses were still departing. A few months later, a general increase had to be given to all personnel. The Board of Trustees was having still another problem. So many of the members were involved in some phase of the war that it was difficult to obtain a quorum at meetings. In April of 1918 it became necessary to appoint a committee to administer the Hospital's business during the summer. This led in the fall to an enlargement of the Board and the creation, under a by-law amendment, of a five-man executive committee to act in the absence of the Board.

Then the most serious blow of all fell. Spanish influenza, a plague of epidemic proportions, crowded the hospitals with its victims. Anybody not suffering from the disease had a strong desire to stay away from a hospital. The Free Hospital for Women was early placed in quarantine as patients with influenza had been found there. In September of 1918 the Trustees discussed the situation and for the record made the following statement: "Whereas the Hospital is now nearly vacant and the regular duties of the medical staff and nurses have practically ceased and, Whereas the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has made a special request for the temporary use of the Hospital during the present emergency, Now, therefore the accommodations and resources of the



Hospital are hereby placed at the disposal of the Commonwealth for the treatment and care of people suffering from Spanish Influenza, all the same to be under the direction of William P. Graves, M.D."

There was a complete cessation of surgery at the Hospital during the time it was devoted entirely to influenza cases. The war and the epidemic ended the Nurses' School because so many doctors and nurses were either in the service or so overworked they could carry no other burdens. The story of the plague was a distressing one. Its impact was more grievous to America than America realized. There was no Samuel Pepys to record its horrors.



## *Chapter VIII*



THE RAVAGES of the epidemic lessened with the coming of cold weather, and in November the war came to an end. It now was possible to try to get the Hospital back to normal. "Normal" for Dr. Graves was to get on with his building program and other programs for expanding the use of the Hospital. The large parcel of land, almost three acres in area, across Glen Road from the Hospital, acquired for \$40,000.00, was to provide space for more building. Not all of the land would be needed and some of it was sold off.

In April of 1919, Dr. Graves asked for and obtained an appropriation of \$80,000.00 to build a new heating plant. The heating system headache which had been bothersome almost since the day the main building was erected was about to be cured. Also in 1919 construction of a new laundry building began, thereby ending another difficulty. Over fifty years later, the prosaic laundry building was recycled architecturally by M. M. Davis of Boston and became the world-famous Radiation Treatment Planning Center of the Joint Center for Radiation Therapy. Because of all the building activity the Hospital had to be closed in the summer months of 1920 and 1921.

In the spring of 1919, Dr. Graves offered a startling proposal which took a little time to digest. The Hospital had been a Free Hospital since the day it was opened. It was true that there was a box conveniently placed for the offerings of grateful patients, but it almost never had anything in it. One doctor who was an interne in the early twenties insists that a whole year's gifts from that source were less than ten dollars. An experiment was tried of giving each discharged patient a

statement of what the cost of her stay had been to the Hospital, but the patients were unable to respond and the experiment did not succeed. The women who came were of such limited means that while they were grateful they still could not pay. Sometimes, but only sometimes, the charity of the Hospital was abused. There is a story that on the admission card sent out to one frequent patient who had to come back once again were typed the words, "Do not bring trunk."

Finally, on July 29, 1919, Dr. Graves was delighted to see the Trustees amend the by-laws by adding to the list of potential patients women of better means who were in need of surgical aid and treatment and who would be able to make payment to the Hospital for service but "this was to be without profit to the members of the Corporation." In other words, for the first time part of the Hospital was no longer to be "Free." The Hospital had become so famous for its brilliant record that women of all economic levels were eager to obtain the services obtainable there. At first there were thoughts of building an adjoining hospital because it was obvious there would be difficulties if paying and non-paying patients were in the same location. From the point of view of the plant itself it was apparent that the size of the Hospital had now reached a point where it was necessary to do some overall planning, and architects were employed in 1920 to submit a scheme for enlargement and development of Hospital buildings. While there had been generous gifts and bequests and while the endowment fund was growing, nevertheless there would have to be borrowing to continue the expansion program.

On May 9, 1921, the Trustees decided to go ahead. The decision to erect a new East Wing was made. It would contain what was in essence a small private hospital, and it would also contain a new laboratory and additional quarters for nurses. Dr. Graves said later that all the expansion underway "marked an important epoch in the history of The Free Hospital for Women by its transition from a minor institution to a standard modern hospital."

The new building was finished in July of 1922. The idea of a completely separate private hospital was given up as the project was beyond available resources. The new wing turned out to be partly an enlargement of the old establishment while at the same time it furnished separate quarters for private patients. The payment for it came from borrowing and from unrestricted investments of the Corporation. The addition was five stories in height and extended from the old operating pavilion easterly to the edge of the grounds on Pond Street. The basement floor would contain the outpatient department, the X-ray room,



and a vault for radium. The floor above would contain new laboratories and a lecture room. In the three upper floors were to be forty single hospital rooms and a new operating room for private patients. It was intended that sixteen hospital rooms on the third floor would be used for The Free Hospital's cancer patients and twenty-four hospital rooms on the fourth and fifth floors would be used for private patients in quarters carefully separated from the old Hospital. In addition to the new, large "East Wing," a smaller wing was projected at right angles from the central portion of the old building south toward Pond Avenue. It created a new main entrance on that side of the building which in later years was seldom used. This smaller wing also furnished new space for administration offices, additional offices for doctors, and a few more hospital rooms in its upper floors.

The doubts about treating private and charity patients under the same roof and under the same hospital management were to continue. Some thought the well-to-do would not be persuaded to go to a hospital called a Free Hospital, even though the name of the private section was now called the Parkway Hospital, and even though a separate entrance to the Parkway Hospital had been created at the end of the new "East Wing." Others thought that contact between the two divisions might produce clashes. The financially minded felt sure that the funds of the charity side might be called upon to make up deficits from the private side. At a number of annual meetings Dr. Graves was careful to report that all fears were proving groundless and that the new arrangement was working well. He told the Corporation that the fine location of the Hospital had been a strong factor in bringing patients of all walks of life to its doors, and, what was more, he pointed out, the private section was producing economies and efficiencies in the over-all operation. Two years later, perhaps just when the Trustees and the Ladies' Board may have been thinking everything was well in hand, Dr. Graves asked them to give their careful consideration "to the unsolved important problem of treating the great middle class of patients who are neither objects for charity nor able to pay the prices of a private hospital." It would be long after his death before private and public health insurance would in the main furnish the answers to the problem he posed.

There was an exciting human-interest interlude to all the activity when on March 3, 1921, Dr. Herbert Wright and Miss Marion Sawyer rescued a "person unknown to them" who had fallen through the treacherous ice of Muddy River below the Hospital. The Massachusetts Humane Society awarded them medals for their Heroism. The Trustees

commended them and included in their commendations Miss Laura Dunn who had assisted in the rescue.

During the summer of 1922 the Hospital was visited by an agent of the American College of Surgeons, and as a result The Free Hospital for Women was officially recorded among the first-class hospitals of the country. The agent was impressed with the system of individual private rooms for recovery of patients immediately following surgery, a system theretofore almost peculiar to The Free Hospital.

An important development came in January of 1922 when a letter was received from Dr. Harvey Cushing of the Harvard Medical School proposing that The Free Hospital for Women and the Boston Lying-in Hospital "might mutually benefit by the establishment of a fused house-officer service which would give young men who propose to specialize either in Gynecology or Obstetrics a broader training, and at the same time tend to make both hospitals more productive in research." Dr. Graves urged strongly that some such plan be adopted, but he made the reservation that the salaries of the young men should be paid by the Medical School and not by The Free Hospital. Then he added that The Free Hospital "should not surrender its independence in the way of appointments." Dr. Cushing's proposed arrangement was adopted, and Dr. Graves' amendments were also accepted. A special feature of the plan was that there would be a resident in each hospital who was to devote part of his time to teaching and research in behalf of the Medical School. By the new arrangement one more connection was added to the already long list of associations between Harvard and The Free Hospital.

Dr. Graves seemed to have a compulsion to add to the Hospital's plant, but he was deterred by lack of money. His reports and speeches refer often to "the perennial bugbear of insufficient funds." Part of the paucity of income was, of course, due to the fact that some of the Hospital's investments had been sold and debt incurred to build the new wing. In 1925 he admitted that plans for increasing the capacity of the Hospital had to be dropped. He may have been chagrined, although the record does not say so, that cancer patients had to be moved out of the new wing back to the old building to provide for more "paying rooms" in the Parkway Hospital.

The need for money kept on until the Trustees in the spring of 1927 voted to undertake a drive to raise a million dollars to increase the endowment fund. The publicity was extensive. Every effort was made to tell potential givers that their gifts would go to The Free Hospital where some of the best-known gynecologists in Boston made up the

unpaid staff, and where five doctors in the out-patient department were making seven thousand free examinations a year. The public was told that funds were needed for radium, for beds, and for seven special rooms then reserved for incurable cancer patients, and for facilities to reduce "the enormous waiting list."

A well-to-do Boston man asked Dr. Graves why hospitals did not curtail their activities and live within their income. His reply, as he later set it forth in a report to the Corporation, could be adopted as a textbook classic by all hospital fund raisers. He stated tersely that it was impossible to support a hospital by payments from patients since costs were far beyond the average patient's ability to repay. Without gifts and bequests the living organism of a hospital would cease to grow. He dwelt at length on the scientific aspect of a hospital's work, a work which had little direct connection with a patient's stay in a hospital, yet which must be done before man's medical knowledge could advance.

For all Dr. Graves' eloquence the drive raised only half the amount sought. He attributed the failure to the "Vermont flood which occurred in the midst of the work" and to drives commenced at the same time by other excellent charities. Nevertheless, the proceeds of the drive approached a half million dollars and, no doubt, all the activity produced in the drive was responsible for several subsequent sizeable gifts which came in later.

Then, as now, the field of pathology had an appeal to the potential giver which everyday hospital procedure did not as a rule possess and, properly nurtured, it produced contributions. Dr. Graves in 1926 made a public statement to the effect that there should be greater awareness of the need for an experimental laboratory where cancer studies, particularly of cancer among women, could be intensified. Both Dr. Graves and Dr. Pemberton were eminent pathologists, but they had reached a point in their careers where they lacked the time demanded by the laboratory. Dr. Graves announced that George Van Siclen Smith would be Resident Surgeon at The Free Hospital and this even before he had received his M.D. degree. He would concentrate on the study of cancer. George Smith, as a second year student at the Harvard Medical School, had performed some of his studies at The Free Hospital. Many years later he said, "I came to the Hospital in the fall of 1923, and I haven't been away since." He proved to be just the man to relieve the two senior doctors. In June of 1927 he was sent abroad to study the latest developments of the treatment of cancer, and the trip was well publicized.

That same year there was frequent mention in the newspapers that a



new professorship in gynecology was being established at the Harvard Medical School with funds left by Dr. William Henry Baker, and the first incumbent was, almost as a matter of course, Dr. William Phillips Graves.

An important appointment with important consequences was made on October 27, 1927, when Dr. John C. Rock became surgeon to out-patients. He had served briefly once before, during 1919, at The Free Hospital. His name would be heard nationally and internationally in the following years.

A major financial contribution of the late twenties came from the Corporation's president, George R. Fearing. He gave the money to erect in 1928 a modern laboratory across Glen Road from the Hospital building. It was a peculiarly well-timed benefaction. Dr. George Smith had already begun work on what constitutes a fine reservoir of gynecological research information. He commenced a complete classification and pathological analysis of all the case histories in the files of the Hospital beginning with the records of 1875. Thousands of letters were written to former patients to ascertain, where possible, their condition of health. The impressive accumulation of case-history records maintained ever since the beginning days occupies many square feet of space at the Hospital. Somewhere in those thousands of pages must lie the clue to the cause and cure of cancer and other diseases if only the riddle could be read.

While George Smith had been at Harvard as an undergraduate he had earned part of his tuition by tutoring the nieces and nephews of Miss Elizabeth Putnam during summers at Manchester, Mass. Through her he met Mrs. Elizabeth Lowell Putnam, sister of Harvard's president A. Lawrence Lowell. To use Dr. Smith's own expression, Mrs. Putnam became his "fairy godmother." Her plan in 1928 to establish a laboratory at the Boston Lying-in Hospital for the purpose of studying toxemia in pregnancy had a proviso that George Van S. Smith be its head. The proposal was refused primarily because of the limiting proviso. The same offer was then made to Dr. Graves for studies at The Free Hospital with the same proviso. He had been so impressed by the work of George Smith over a period of five years that he accepted at once. Mrs. Putnam guaranteed to pay \$3,500.00 each year for fifteen years toward the cost of the research, and Reginald W. Bird, one of the trustees, agreed to match her contribution. Thus, almost as though he had Aladdin's lamp, Dr. Graves got the laboratory he wanted, the funds to support it, and the young man to run it. That



same young man was later to be head of the Hospital and Baker Professor of Gynecology at the Harvard Medical School.

An important gift, one not publicly announced at the time, was made by trustee Francis W. Fabyan. He nearly doubled the Hospital's supply of radium by a donation of well over \$10,000.00. He happened to hear at the Hospital one day that a patient had been obliged to wait before the radium needed in her case could be spared from another treatment then in progress.

In 1929 the Misses Isabel and Sarah Hyams agreed to give \$80,000.00 to erect a night nurses' home. The funds were to come from the Godfrey M. Hyams Charitable Trust Fund. Dr. Graves had forcefully mentioned on several occasions the need for such a home. Miss Ewin's annual report back in 1919 had stated that in the nurses' home "a large unfinished attic with the possibility of 14 additional rooms seems to be adequate for all the future needs of the Hospital." Time had proved her forecast to be quite wrong. When she retired in 1929, she had forty-five nurses under her charge and an additional fifteen student nurses with no one of them very eager to live in "a large unfinished attic." The Hyams house was a fine addition.

Across the road from the Hospital there now stood a power plant and a laundry, a nurses' home, a night nurses' home, quarters for the out-patient department, and the Fearing Laboratory. Added to the original Hospital building was a new five-story wing called the Parkway Hospital, and another small extension had been made to the central part of the old building on the Pond Avenue side.

Dr. Graves was a master builder, but just as he was successful in erecting an enlarged physical plant, so did he expand and build the medical departments of The Free Hospital. To be sure, in his last years he no longer had Miss Ewin to help him, but she was most ably succeeded in 1929 by Miss Margaret Copeland, a native of Portland, Maine, and a graduate of the Massachusetts General Hospital School, who was an administrator not quite as forceful, not quite the individualist, but nevertheless a Superintendent well educated in modern nursing and entirely capable of handling the enlarged responsibilities. Dr. Graves had also lost the Corporation Secretary, Nathaniel U. Walker, who had served for forty-three years from his first appointment in 1885. He was succeeded by his nephew, Joseph T. Walker. With the exception of these two losses, Dr. Graves had most of his early team with him, and he had greatly added to it.

As he began to prepare for his resignation from office, he still had



*Margaret Copeland*

time to publish in 1931 his work, *Female Sex Hormonology*, at that time a relatively new subject. In 1932, Dr. Graves resigned his professorship at Harvard just as Boston University was conferring on him the degree of Doctor of Science. In December of 1932, he went to England to receive an honorary fellowship in the British College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. The citation accompanying the award gives an excellent description of a great physician at the height of his career:

"Professor Graves. In this world of haste and hurry, conditions not unknown in your country, you stand out in our branch of medicine as a man of quiet contemplation, of wise discretion and of sober judgment. Your influence on the progress of obstetrics and gynecology has been profound, not only in the United States, but wherever there exists a parcel post for the transport of your classical works. You are an artist both in practice and in theory. The beautiful illustrations drawn by your own hand which adorn your papers and books are the admiration of all. You bring artistry to your craft. You are, too, a thinker and hidden under a deep reserve lie golden thoughts."

Dr. Graves felt the time had come to terminate his years of administering The Free Hospital for Women. Applications for internship at what was now a famous institution were flooding in, and most of them had to be rejected. Many visitors from home and abroad were coming to see the results being obtained at the laboratory and to see the record system which was so comprehensive. The Hospital plant and the Hospital staff had reached commanding strength. The results of his great work were all about him. On November 10, 1932, the Trustees voted to accept his resignation and to appoint him, as of January 1, 1933, Visiting Surgeon Emeritus.

On January 23, 1933, Dr. William Phillips Graves died after an illness of two weeks. His funeral services filled the pews at Arlington Street Church in Boston. The newspapers carried lengthy obituaries and a bust of him was carved to be placed next to the bust of Dr. Baker in the halls of The Free Hospital. For twenty-six years of energetic effort he had labored to change a small but effective hospital into a large but effective hospital, and he had succeeded. Once again the old order changed, and suddenly the burden fell on another pair of shoulders.





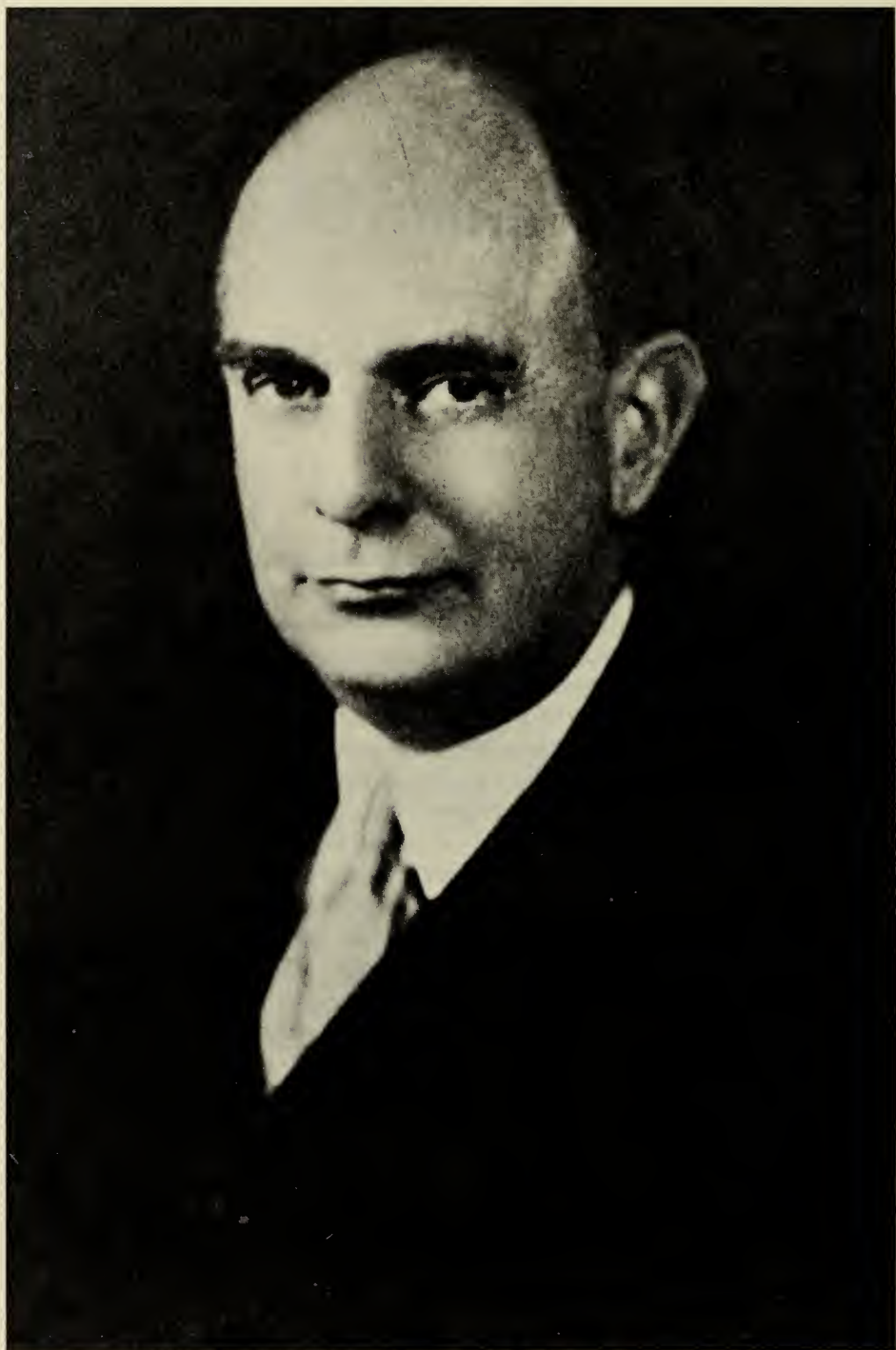
## Chapter IX



IT WAS Dr. Pemberton's turn to carry the burden, and it was his misfortune to have the burden severely increased by factors completely beyond his control. One factor, the great depression in the economy, was already under way at the time of his accession. The second, another Great World War, was to arrive before ten years had passed.

As previously noted, Dr. Frank Arthur Pemberton was a native of Newton, one of Boston's adjoining suburbs. Except for a few years following his graduation from Harvard Medical School in 1909, his medical career was closely associated with The Free Hospital, an association that was to continue for nearly forty years. He was a scholarly physician; his writings covered the whole field of gynecology. He was a scientific physician; he was The Free Hospital's pathologist from 1911 to 1928 and was a recognized authority on gynecological pathology in particular. He was a hard-working physician; during his career he saw a total of fourteen thousand patients in the various clinics of The Free Hospital and an additional thirteen thousand five hundred in private practice, and he performed over nine thousand operations in his lifetime. He was a brilliant surgeon; it was said of him that he had "the particular combination of acumen, judicious intrepidity, and technical skill requisite to eminence in surgery."

Dr. Graves had early recognized his genius and had succeeded in getting him to come to The Free Hospital to carry on, at first, the work in pathology which to Dr. Graves was a major part of the Hospital's reason for being. Together they pioneered in that very important field, the use of radium in the treatment of cancer. As a medical team they



*Dr. Frank Pemberton*

pulled well together. The records do not disclose that Dr. Graves assigned any general management duties to Dr. Pemberton until the time of his own resignation. It is possible that he had arranged to have Dr. Pemberton assist in the executive side. However, it is a fair inference from the silence of the records that Dr. Graves was the high-powered type who felt no need to share the responsibilities in the over-all direction of the Hospital's affairs.

If this was the case, it did not lessen in any way the respect of the elder doctor for the younger. When Dr. Graves in 1932 resigned his professorship at Harvard, Dr. Pemberton was appointed Clinical Professor of Gynecology, and it must have been at Dr. Graves' suggestion. Dr. Pemberton immediately signed over to The Free Hospital the major portion of the income he was to receive as a professor, the money so assigned to be used to defray expenses of research work at the Fearing Research Laboratory.

One of Dr. Pemberton's first duties after assuming the leadership of the Hospital was to ask the Board to pass resolutions upon the death of his former mentor. Another footnote to history was that at the same meeting he had to ask the Board to accept the resignation from the staff of Dr. Harold W. Baker, son of the Hospital's founder.

Early in his administration, he requested that the Trustees change his title to Chief Surgeon and give the title of Visiting Surgeon to Dr. George Van S. Smith and Dr. John Rock. This was intended to produce a greater sharing of authority at the top. He was fortunate also that Dr. Paul A. Younge, who was to achieve an international reputation in the diagnosis and treatment of early cancer in the uterine cervix, came to The Free Hospital to serve as resident in Gynecology and Pathology.

Help was needed. All institutions dependent on the public's charity were suffering heavily from the decline in contributions caused by the Great Depression of the early thirties. On the day Dr. Pemberton became head of the Hospital there was put into effect a general reduction in salaries. Miss Copeland had already reduced the annual compensation for new nurses taken on in 1932. The average number of patients on the paying side of the Hospital had been cut in half as the well-to-do were no longer well-to-do. The difficulties were partially eased by some substantial bequests left by old friends of the Hospital. One note in this respect is of interest. The residue of an estate left to The Free Hospital contained some excellent jewels. The Trustees, after consideration, decided that due to inexperience on the part of the Board it would be wise to leave the sale of the jewels to the executors. One wonders what happened next. How successful were the executors in

selling jewels in those hard days? There is no further entry, but from what is recorded we can see how closely the Trustees paid attention to business.

The economic stringency produced "The Community Fund." Its first appearance in the records of The Free Hospital for Women came in the Trustees' minutes for October 6, 1933. The Treasurer reported that although the Hospital's income was smaller it probably would still be sufficient to cover expenses. It was, however, voted that while the Trustees were opposed in principle to a Community Chest Plan, they would authorize the Treasurer to join the campaign provided the terms and conditions were satisfactory to him. Apparently they were satisfactory because the Hospital was in the campaigns of 1933 and 1934. When 1935 came along the Trustees at first voted to withdraw from the Community Chest, but when the Community Federation of Boston was organized, the Trustees appointed President Fearing and Superintendent Copeland as delegates, and the Hospital became one of the one hundred and ten members of the new organization which ever since has held an important position in the financing of Greater Boston's charitable institutions. Another source of funds for The Free Hospital was the American Cancer Society which through its gifts gave recognition to the Hospital's continuing efforts and growing importance in the study of cancer.

Welcome as these additional funds were, at the time they formed only a small part of the answer to pressing financial need. However, they represented a departure from the experience of the Hospital in its long dependence on the generosity of its close friends. There are many outstanding examples which could be cited. Two will suffice. It has already been stated that Reginald W. Bird and Mrs. W. L. Putnam had guaranteed \$3,500. apiece to be paid each year for fifteen years to support the Hospital's laboratory. Mr. Bird's payment continued for five years beyond the guaranteed period, and Mrs. Putnam's payment also carried on for the same lengthened period. Her payments went well above the guaranteed amounts. In several years they were as high as \$10,000.00 and they were continued a number of years after her death by her executors. It is not entirely fair to all the other many benefactors to single out these two donors for mention, but their cases are excellent examples of the personal attachment which its friends had for The Free Hospital.

There are other instances of the devotion of many people to the Hospital over its hundred years of history, but perhaps the strongest sense of this devotion can be recaptured by reading in the minute



books of the meetings of the Ladies' Board. For example, at one meeting it was announced that the Board had been asked to raise \$38,000.00, and each lady was thereupon requested to be responsible for the raising of \$600.00. Simple as that! The entries dealing with the regular visits of the Lady Visitors are personal and enlightening. The record for February 27, 1934, carried this report: "The Visitors for February were Mrs. F. W. Hobbs, Miss Stanwood, Mrs. Taft, and Mrs. Ralph Bradley. Mrs. Hobbs spoke of the wonderful morale of the patients and their great pleasure when visited. She encountered the first sulky woman she had ever seen in the Hospital and the embarrassment of the other patients over her behavior was amusing." It was a very personal hospital.

Another touch of human interest, one which had nothing to do with the Ladies' Board, caused a considerable stir. Miss Copeland and her assistant, Miss Grahm, decided to get rid of some useless, old keys. They secretly disposed of them by dropping them in a spot off the beaten path in the nearby Blue Hills Reservation. The keys were discovered, and because they bore such tags as "Ward II" and "Infirmary Closet" were immediately associated with the search for a missing doctor who had no connection with the Hospital. The publication of the discovery forced the nurses to inform the authorities that the keys did not belong to the missing doctor. His body was later found in a pond in Framingham.

The minutes of the Trustees meetings, as already mentioned, give an excellent picture of the personal involvement of its members in the workings of the Hospital. At a meeting in 1936, there was a report of financial needs at the Fearing Laboratory. The President at once offered to give \$1,000.00 per year for eight years, and a fellow Trustee, Richard C. Paine, agreed to give \$40,000.00. This was by no means the last evidence of Richard Paine's generosity. On many occasions there appears in the record that an anonymous giver has paid the cost of some wanted equipment, and after his death, it turned out that Richard Paine had furnished the funds. Over a period of many years his counsel and advice were sought by the Trustees Board.

At a meeting in the Fall of 1937, the Trustees paused in their business affairs to record their appreciation of the great services of Miss Hannah Jane Ewin who had died in retirement at the age of seventy-seven on October 28, 1937. It did not appear in the Trustees' vote that for years prior to her death, Miss Ewin had suffered from deep, incurable radium burns on her hands caused by handling the silver-covered capsules without instruments. On February 24, 1938, the Trustees voted to

agree to give the Town of Brookline a small parcel of land in exchange for the closing of Glen Road in front of the Hospital to through traffic. Entries such as these demonstrate the close interest of the Trustees in all the affairs of the Hospital, however small the affairs might be.

In the later 1930's, even though the worst aspects of depression in the economy had passed, Dr. Pemberton still kept a tight rein on expenditures. There was no talk of further building expansion. As a matter of fact, he brought to the Trustees for approval some requests for minor hospital expenditures which seem rather miniscule. But the times were hard.

As to the Hospital's expansion in medical matters, Dr. Pemberton suffered no pause. In July of 1938, he brought in Dr. Arthur T. Hertig as Pathologist to the Hospital. Dr. Hertig, with his high qualities as administrator, investigator, and teacher, was to add greatly to the strength of the staff. The quality of the staff is indicated by the fact that in 1938 there were on it Dr. Pemberton, who had been a professor at Harvard Medical School since 1933, and three others who were to become professors at the School: Dr. George Van S. Smith, Dr. John Rock, and Dr. Arthur T. Hertig. In relation to the size of the staff, this was a surprisingly high proportion. It was one more indicator of the close connection between the School and The Free Hospital. Another conclusion to be drawn is that the Hospital was engaged in most important research with four such scientists on its staff. Dr. Pemberton had been recognized for many years as a brilliant pathologist, and Dr. Rock was acquiring fame for his Fertility and Endocrine Clinic. Dr. Hertig was a young physician with great abilities in pathological research and teaching. Dr. Smith had developed an international reputation for his work in the establishment of case histories and for his labors in the laboratory. The official staff had another important member who came to it in 1929. She became a Harvard professor, and acquired world-wide fame for her studies and writings on steroids and reproduction. As Dr. Olive Watkins, she had been appointed as Dr. Smith's laboratory associate in 1929. She was the first woman ever to receive a Ph.D. degree from the Division of Medical Science at the Harvard Medical School. She and Dr. Smith were married in 1930. Together they made the Fearing Laboratory into an institution that could almost be called the "Smith Laboratory," so devoted have they been to its analyses and experiments.

The Hospital, early in the next decade, was suddenly faced, along with the rest of the nation, with the stresses and strains of another World War. As in the time of the First World War, there was a serious



*Dr. Olive Watkins Smith*



shortage of nurses and physicians. Dr. William P. Graves' son, Dr. Sidney Graves, resigned early to serve as a medical officer in the Navy; he was destined to die in action in the Pacific. His portrait, painted by Gardner Cox, was presented to the Hospital by friends, and hangs as a memorial in the reception room of the Hospital. Dr. Meinolph V. Kappius of the Naval Reserve was reported missing in action, and another gold star was added to the Hospital's service flag. There were practice emergency mobilizations and practice emergency blackouts to prepare for air-raids that fortunately never came. In 1943 the Hospital was required to convert its heating plant from oil to coal. Hyams House, the nurses' home, had to be closed for lack of fuel, but fewer nurses were living there anyway. The nursing school had been dwindling in size for several years before the war and it had to be discontinued when the war pressures became too great. There were many gaps in the personnel lists. One advertisement in the Boston papers sought in one day a laundry press operator, a cook, and a carpenter. Some of the required housekeeping at that time was carried out by members of the Ladies' Board. It has since been reported that many mornings, well before winter sunrise, Mrs. Ward Paine would arrive to undertake some necessary hospital task, and other members of the Board rendered similar devoted service. There was increasing difficulty in arranging transportation to the Hospital. Yet, like other institutions, the adoption of "make-do" policies eventually took care of the situation.

In the first ten years Dr. Pemberton was at the head of the Hospital most of his reports to the Corporation dealt with medical matters, but beginning with his report for 1942 and until his resignation at the end of 1946, his reports dealt with a new condition, one that was to produce a major change in The Free Hospital. His 1942 report mentioned the notable increase in the earnings of the lower income groups. His 1943 report emphasized the condition once more, and then he added that the Blue Cross and Blue Shield coverages were producing increased demands for private accommodations. In that one year there had been a decline of thirty-four per cent in the number of visits to the outpatient department. The closing of one "free" ward for lack of nurses had been accompanied by a lack of patients. At the same time there had been a sharp increase in the number of admissions to the Parkway Hospital, the private wing. In 1944, Dr. Pemberton reported that the Parkway Hospital was operating "pretty near capacity." The following year his report mentioned the end of the war, but it also mentioned another new factor in the Hospital's administration. Almost as though



he were looking a bit fearfully over his shoulder, he commented on "the possible intrusion by the Federal Government into the medical affairs of its citizens." He urged the Trustees to be cautious about accepting Federal assistance in any new construction until it could be established what strings might be attached to such assistance.

In the latter part of 1946, the demands for more space in the Parkway Hospital became suddenly urgent. The war's end, the population growth, the increased funds in the hands of the citizens, the various hospital insurance plans, all forced the Trustees to consider the possibility of constructing a new wing. Rough estimates were presented showing the capital outlay and the net operating cost of such a wing. The figures were shocking and discussion was postponed.

As of January 1, 1947, Dr. Frank A. Pemberton submitted his resignation as Chief Surgeon, ending thirty-six years of great service to The Free Hospital. Dr. George Van S. Smith was elected in his place.



*Dr. George Van Siclen Smith*

# Chapter X



GEORGE VAN SICLEN SMITH was born in New York City on September 17, 1900, the son of Dr. Edward Franklin Smith and Mildred (Knorr) Smith. The family was large, and it was necessary for all its members to pitch in wherever possible. At the age of ten, George Smith was a boy soprano in the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine. His deep voice of later years would give no evidence of its earlier high range. In the Cathedral one of the choir officials took an interest in his future and arranged a scholarship at Phillips Academy in Andover, Mass. He attended Harvard College from 1918 to 1921, completing his courses in three years, but he waited and took his A.B. degree with his class in 1922. He then took a year off to replenish his finances before going to Harvard Medical School where he obtained his M.D. cum laude in 1926. His studies and work during medical school at The Free Hospital for Women led him to select that institution as the place for his medical career to open. His early devotion to The Free Hospital must have been extraordinarily strong. One day in 1924 Miss Ewin suggested to him that he looked as if he needed exercise and recommended he obtain it by mowing the Hospital's lawn. After the job was done he began experiencing sharp, abdominal pains. Reginald W. Smithwick, Harvard Medical School, '25, made the diagnosis of acute appendicitis and surgery was performed that evening, ether being administered by Miss Ewin. Dr. George Van S. Smith thereby became the second male patient in the Hospital's operating room. Dr. Edward B. Sheehan, an important member of the staff since 1916, held the honor of being the first.



As already mentioned, through the generosity of Mrs. Elizabeth Lowell Putnam and Reginald W. Bird he was established as Pathologist at The Free Hospital where he commenced his extensive examination of gynecological case histories. When he married Miss Olive Watkins of Worcester, Mass., they established an unusually close domestic and scientific partnership. Their home was quite near the Hospital so that it has been relatively simple for them to keep an eye on the affairs of laboratory, home and family without undue inconvenience.

His report to his fiftieth class reunion at Harvard in 1972 contains an impressive statistic. He stated there that he and Mrs. Smith have published separately and together 183 papers. Dr. Smith's literary abilities came to him naturally as his professor father had been a teacher and author of a text entitled *Anatomy, Physiology, and Hygiene*. It is an amusing coincidence, in view of his 1924 experience with his appendix, that the first item which he records in the Class Report under the heading of Recreation is "lawn mowing." He added as other forms of recreation "hedge-clipping, washing walls, vacuum cleaning, and splitting wood." These entries no doubt were intended to give his classmates a chuckle, but the entries happened to be true. For many years he enjoyed sailing chartered boats in Maine coastal waters and took pride in never having sailed "a craft to the bottom." His Class Report concluded on a frustrated note: "I have tried to do something about cancer for forty-seven years and am depressed at the lack of real progress in its detection and therapy." That this is an under-evaluation can be demonstrated by the reading of an article by Dr. Brian Little in the July, 1970, issue of *The Obstetrical and Gynecological Survey*. It gives an excellent review of the scientific methods of the Smiths and their achievements to that date.

When he became head of The Free Hospital for Women, he was already the William H. Baker Professor of Gynecology at Harvard. Dr. Smith was to hold that chair for twenty-five years; without any fanfare he returned to Harvard the emolument carried by the professorship. He always cherished the relationship between the Hospital and the Medical School. A few years after his assumption of the chief responsibility, he reported to the Corporation that each year approximately one hundred and fifty students from the School received formal instruction at the Hospital, as well as fifteen doctors who came as post-graduate students from near and far.

This report, of course, was made after the end of World War II. During the war Dr. Pemberton and Dr. Smith had to supervise jointly the struggle to keep the Hospital going. The various printed reports





*Lillian Grahn*

of the time show that Miss Margaret Copeland, Administrator, was carrying a major portion of the work. Apparently, after the regime of Dr. Graves and Miss Ewin, many responsibilities were transferred to her, and despite ill health she assumed the responsibilities and carried them out with great effectiveness. Her ill health forced her to resign at the end of Dr. Smith's first year in office with less than three years of life left to her. It was well that the Hospital had as her successor her assistant, Miss Lillian Grahm, a native of Gardner, Mass., and a graduate of the Newton Hospital School of Nursing. She had come to The Free Hospital in 1930 with a first assignment of instructing young Harvard Medical School students in methods of administering anesthesia, and with the students had the privilege of attending Dr. Graves' and Miss Ewin's silent breakfasts. Her executive ability freed Dr. Smith from many problems of the internal management of the Hospital. She was to continue in the position of Administrator until her retirement in 1969.

The conclusion of World War II faced Dr. Smith and the Trustees with the same problems which had arisen at the end of World War I: lack of space and rising costs. During Dr. Pemberton's last year as Surgeon-in-Chief, a proposal to build an extension onto the main building received a quick set-back when early estimates indicated that it would take \$1,500,000.00 to complete it. In view of the balance of \$400,000.00 in the building fund and the unlikelihood of raising the rest from charity-minded citizens, it was decided that construction would be unwarranted; and a drive for funds, already underway, was halted.

However, Dr. Smith and President Joseph T. Walker, Jr., decided in the following year to get the ball rolling once again. On March 2, 1948, the Trustees voted to initiate a campaign to raise over a million dollars which, with the building fund balance, would produce the desired structure. There were campaign dinners. There was great publicity. Sketches were submitted of a new five-story wing to run between the old Hospital building and Pond Avenue. Conferences were held with architects and proposed contractors. There were weekly reports of progress to the press. But it just could not be done. When the total approached \$600,000.00 the campaign stuttered and stopped. In June of 1949 a letter had to be sent to all who had given stating that construction of the wing had to be postponed and requesting permission from the donors to use the funds for smaller additions and for future capital needs. A later report informed the Trustees that all donors had assented but one. He was a surgeon who wanted his gift to be used to install air-conditioning in the operating rooms.

Financial results were not all on the downside. Several grants from the American Cancer Society as well as support from the Cancer Commission of the U.S. Department of Public Health were a great help in maintaining the work of the Fearing Laboratory. A special donation was also received to further Dr. Rock's investigative work. However, there was a minor increase in costs because for some unexplained reason more and more nurses began living in the Nurses Home again. The income of nurses had increased substantially over former days. In 1951 Miss Grahn reported that private duty nurses probably would be asking for an increase despite their current pay of forty-four dollars a week. Trustee Philip Eiseman, chairman of the personnel committee, joined with Miss Grahn that year in making what was only the first of their annual recommendations as to compensation and fringe benefits which it was anticipated would improve the low pay levels which had prevailed in The Free Hospital and all hospitals for many years.

Still on the matter of finances, it had come as a shock to the Trustees that The Free Hospital was being asked by the Community Fund "to abandon its present method of asking for donations from patients given free care" and instead to bill such patients outright, rebating any amount beyond the patient's capacity to pay. This request by the Community Fund referred to a new procedure, introduced in 1949, of giving a statement to each free patient which showed the cost of the hospital care and which bore this message: "This is a memorandum bill given to you to show the cost of your hospital stay. Any part of the bill you can pay will be appreciated. That part of the bill you cannot pay will be paid for from the gifts of others which have made it possible to build the Hospital and meet the cost of caring for you." The response had been minimal, and now the Community Fund was asking for a change. The Trustees declined to depart from the seventy-five year old tradition of The Free Hospital. Time was eventually to force their hands. Even the next year, Miss Grahn reported that voluntary payments from patients had dropped still more.

A significant report came from Mrs. Olive W. Smith when she said in 1951, "In the little yellow building behind the Hospital, four female scientists have improved each shining hour of the year with their combined efforts to learn more about the characteristics, causes, and possible cures of some of women's woes." Female scientists! Just over twenty years ago there was no place in Boston which would admit her to study anatomy.

In 1952, on March 6, Dr. Frank Pemberton died suddenly. Since his retirement he had stayed on the staff of surgeons and had continued to



be a familiar figure about the corridors of the Hospital. His bust, given by his widow, Mrs. Mary Hardy Pemberton, stands in the reception room of the Hospital today to memorialize his long and able service.

A few months later, Dr. Arthur T. Hertig, one of the brilliant young men brought to the Hospital by Dr. Pemberton, was appointed to the very distinguished chair of Shattuck Professor of Pathological Anatomy at the Harvard Medical School. He agreed to remain on the staff at The Free Hospital. Dr. Donald G. McKay was appointed Pathologist in his stead.

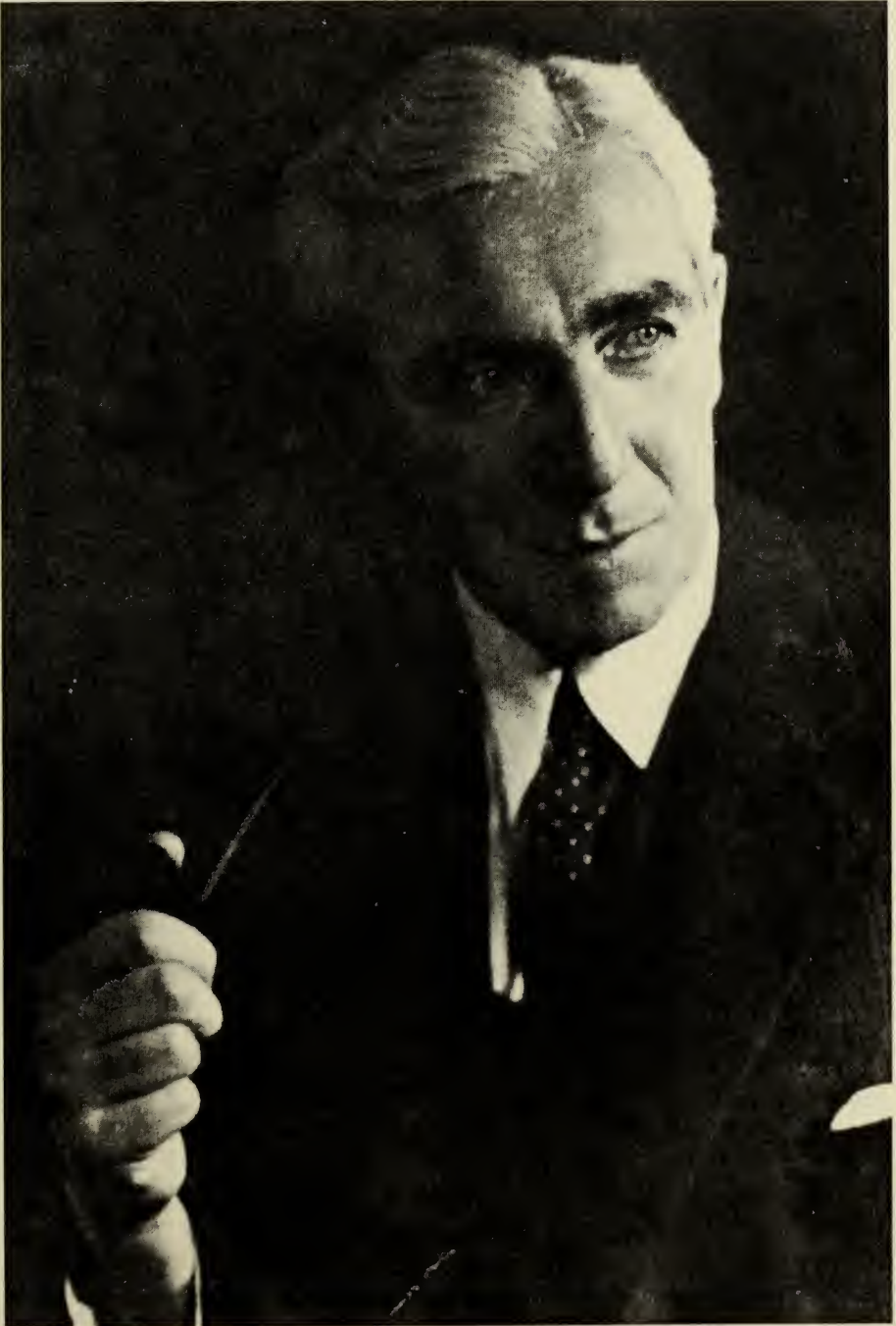
There were still some worries expressed about the expenses of the Fearing Laboratory, but various friends continued to make it the object of their donations. The American College of Surgeons was high in its praise of the work done. The Trustees voted "to grant Dr. Smith authority to change the method of applying radium for treatment" under a joint program with other hospitals. A grant of \$38,000.00, the largest single grant yet received, came from the American Cancer Society. The search for elusive answers was unceasing.

Again the matter of expenditure for more space and better equipment arose. This time it was decided not to set the sights so high; a campaign goal of \$400,000.00 was undertaken and was generally successful. However the total cost of more space and new equipment turned out to be in excess of \$700,000. Additions and alterations to the plant took up most of the outlay. There was a new kitchen, a new operating room, enlargement of the Fearing Laboratory, and a standby generating plant, but there was no air-conditioning.

A special gift of \$93,000.00 was received from Mrs. Stanley McCormack of Santa Barbara, California, to be used to revamp the nurses' home and provide additional quarters for Dr. John Rock's clinic. His world-wide fame in the field of studies of human reproduction had brought reflected fame to the Hospital itself. When the new building was completed it was named the Rock Reproductive Study Center. He became its head, of course; but he stayed on at The Free Hospital as Consulting Gynecologist. At the same time Harvard honored him with the title of Professor Emeritus. He had been Clinical Professor of Gynecology at the Medical School since 1947.

All of the additions and alterations brought the Hospital plant up to date. The changes were essential to the continued progress of a great institution. Other changes, having nothing to do with plant and equipment, were just around the corner, changes which would alter the very nature of The Free Hospital. They were in some aspects surprising, but they need not have been. They had been coming for many years.





*Dr. John Rock*



# Chapter XI



ON APRIL 9, 1953, Joseph T. Walker, Jr. completed twelve years as President of The Free Hospital for Women. When Mr. J. Reed Morss, President of the Boston Five Cents Savings Bank, was elected to take his place, he would indeed have been a man of twenty-twenty foresight if he could have anticipated the major changes which were to occur during his administration.

When The Free Hospital was founded in 1875, as already related, few women in Boston went to a hospital in the event of a medical problem except for those expectant mothers who could afford the advantages of the Boston Lying-in Hospital. Gynecology was in its very beginnings as a branch of medicine, and the women of the poor did not have its benefits available to them until Dr. Baker began his work on East Springfield Street. He founded a hospital which represented many new departures for his time, the chief ones being that it was for women and that it was free.

Now, after World War II, many hospitals had gynecological departments. The Free Hospital for Women and its associated Parkway Hospital were no longer the only institutions in the area caring for women's physical problems. Also, no longer was it possible for The Free Hospital to carry on without payment for its services. In any event, most of its patients, through insurance plans and governmental agencies, were possessed of the means to make payment for services.

In 1954 Miss Grahn, the Administrator, warned that the number of patients in the wards would decrease further. She was soon to say, "We all know that a gynecological hospital such as ours would not be



*J. Reed Morss*



built today." Lest anyone think she was decrying the past she quickly continued, "The Free Hospital for Women, however, was built many years ago and has established a reputation of progression and excellent care of patients and a record of outstanding research." In another report Miss Grahn whimsically remarked that when she came to The Free Hospital she had been told by Miss Copeland that "the leisurely pace of this Hospital made it a desirable spot in which to grow old gracefully." But the changing times had spoiled that prophecy, and Miss Grahn found herself the Administrator of a very busy institution. Because of the decline in the number of purely gynecological patients, general medical and surgical procedures had been added to the list of reasons for admission. No longer was the requirement in effect that the woman to be admitted must be "afflicted with a disease peculiar to her sex." Because of the slow but extensive change which had come about in the character of The Free Hospital, Miss Grahn began to suggest that a merger with some other hospital might be in order. One important factor of change that might make the idea palatable was the declining interest of young doctors and nurses in the science of gynecology alone. They wanted the wider training and study obtainable at a hospital with broader purposes and goals.

Dr. George Smith in a speech to the Corporation also stressed the changed picture. "The Free Hospital for Women," he said, "needs to have its status more clearly defined. It is no longer The *Free* Hospital for Women." He accented the word free. "It is now no different in this respect from any other of the so-called endowed hospitals. The scope has broadened. A change of name is necessary. The time is ripe."

However, for the moment sentiment was too strong. Notwithstanding the many difficulties that kept arising with patients, insurance companies, and social agencies over it, the name was to continue unchanged for several more years until compelling circumstances at last produced a new one.

In the same years that change of name and change of policies were under discussion, the growing importance of being one of Harvard Medical School's circle of teaching hospitals was having its effect. The arrangement could not be a one-way street. If The Free Hospital were to have the benefit of being one of Harvard's teaching hospitals, then it must allow the Medical School some say in its management. Study over the years of The Free Hospital's connection with the Medical School produces the realization that the School was very considerate and restrained in all its suggestions. The situation was one

which could easily have caused frictions and misunderstandings. That it did not is to the credit of The Free Hospital, but it is even more to the credit of the Harvard Medical School.

The relationship between School and Hospital had become closer over the years of the Hospital's existence. That relationship had also created closer bonds with the other Harvard teaching hospitals, particularly with the Boston Lying-in Hospital. In 1950, Dr. Duncan E. Reid, Chief Obstetrician of the Lying-in Hospital, and William L. Richardson Professor of Obstetrics at the Medical School, proposed that The Free Hospital and the Lying-in Hospital integrate their appointments of residents so as to give selected applicants three years of combined training in obstetrics and gynecology. By this coordination, the training required for certification by the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology would be limited at these Harvard-staffed hospitals to carefully chosen students. When Dr. Smith presented the proposal to the Trustees he heartily endorsed it, and the Trustees approved. "Fewer men," he said, "will receive more training."

This arrangement and many others made over the years were rather informal in their nature. Now the time had come to make a far-reaching consolidation of the Harvard teaching hospitals into what a plan dated November 29, 1955 described for the first time as the "Harvard Medical Center." The plan's diplomatically worded clauses emphasized that no individual member hospital would lose its autonomy. The aim would be to minimize overlapping of facilities, personnel, and areas of work, and to achieve the best results in the respective fields of responsibility. It was hoped that the educational and research activities of the Faculty of Medicine would be enhanced, and it was further hoped that joint efforts would provide increased financial resources. Under the plan there would be formed a new corporation to be called the "Harvard Medical Center." Dr. Smith gave strong endorsement of the plan to the Corporation. He commented on the loose arrangements which had formerly prevailed, even though most of the Hospital's medical staff were members of the Medical School's faculty. He indicated that discussions looking toward a closer relationship had been going on for some years, and now a plan had crystallized.

On January 5, 1958, President Morss presented the plan to the Trustees, and it was approved. The Free Hospital had become a member of a single, great enterprise. Its effects were to be extremely important to the community of medicine.

It should not be forgotten that during all the process of change the daily work of the Hospital had to continue, without headlines. This

was particularly true in the laboratories where research allowed no pause. In a special report to the Trustees, Dr. Smith commented that recently ninety per cent of all cases admitted were for surgery, and this had added materially to the work in pathology. But "pure research" was growing, too. "The Fearing Research Laboratory," he said, "has pioneered studies covering human reproduction and its disorders for a generation. Basic information has been obtained. Ovarian change in relation to cancer has been discovered. Estrogens have been tracked down." One of those bright, young "trackers" was a physician by the name of Kenneth J. Ryan. Exhibiting an early interest in hormones, Dr. Ryan, with Dr. Olive Smith, produced some revolutionary research in the early 60's, eventually pinpointing hormonal pathways in the human ovary. In 1973, this same Dr. Ryan would become chief-of-staff of Boston Hospital for Women, the merged institution which would combine The Free Hospital for Women and the Lying-in Hospital. Dr. George Smith also told of negotiations with the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital for joint use of their new radiation therapy division. The capacity of the Hospital's staff to administer a hospital, carry on research, handle private practice, teach would-be doctors, and at the same time consider and adopt such a startling proposition as the Harvard Medical Center is almost beyond the amazed layman's conception.

In 1957 Dr. Smith again raised the question of the Hospital's name. He suggested a change to "Hospital for Women, Harvard Medical Center" or "Women's Division Hospital, Harvard Medical Center." But no one agreed and the proposal was deferred. It was obvious that the Medical Center would like to have something done soon about the anomalous name. The Center was gradually moving on, feeling its way, but growing all the time. Its great effort toward a central medical library was almost all in hand. The magnificent library would become the focus of the Center.

Miss Grahn had continued each year to comment on "the inadvisability of having two separate hospitals, one for obstetrics, another for gynecology." In April of 1960 she finally put on paper the pros and cons of a merger with the Boston Lying-in Hospital and sent them off to President Morss. Some of her reasons against a merger were that patients might fear they would lose the friendliness of a small hospital, the dedication of its staff, and the Hospital's fine location if its locus operandi should be moved; there had been, at times, antagonism and, occasionally, competition between the staffs of the two hospitals, and they might not pull too well together; The Free Hospital was



financially much stronger and would be making a disproportionate contribution of assets; The Free Hospital had been made famous for its patient care and its teaching and its research and its renown might be diminished by merger. Some of her reasons in favor of a merger were that the world of medicine had changed and fewer gynecological patients needed care; more people had been moving farther out into the suburbs and good hospitals were being established there; there had been a decline in the number of ward patients, and a sizeable portion of the Hospital's facilities was not in use; the Hospital's staff was approaching, in many instances, retirement age and it would be difficult to attract young doctors to a small specialized hospital; there were problems of management not being properly handled in the smaller hospitals. A telling argument in favor of merger was that Dean Berry of the Harvard Medical School favored it.

In three of her sentences Miss Grahm displayed her sentiment, her practicality, and her sense of humor; "I sincerely hope that the Free Hospital Trustees will tell me that my observations are incorrect, because I love the place. On the other hand it would be a pity to wait until it is too late to plan intelligently. Even General Electric advertises, 'Progress is our most important product.'"

President Morss promptly presented Miss Grahm's report to the Trustees and feasibility studies commenced. At this juncture another major development occurred which was to require expenditure of time and money. The Harvard Medical Center advanced a proposal to construct a new hospital complex on acreage which had been put together opposite the buildings of the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital in Boston, a complex which for reasons outside our present consideration has not as yet in The Free Hospital's hundredth year come to reality. Miss Grahm, in 1960, described the idea as a "challenging thought," one that might mean diminution of that personal care and attention which had become synonymous with the name "Free Hospital." Americans have long had a mistrust of size, a mistrust which may have come in part from the writings of Horatio Alger.

As matters progressed it became fairly evident that social problems arising from efforts to remove tenants who lived in the area where the proposed complex would be constructed, as well as from financial and architectural considerations, would result in extensive delays despite the efforts of Harvard Medical School and Harvard Medical Center. Consequently, it was decided that the main thrust must be toward a merger of The Free Hospital and the Lying-in Hospital. This did not mean that there would be cessation of effort on the proposition that a



number of the Harvard teaching hospitals would build and occupy the joint complex. Far from it! There were many joint sessions. There was advancement of sizeable funds on a number of occasions. It had been established that the new complex would cost forty million dollars, and half of it, it was hoped, would come from government agencies and charitable foundations with the member hospitals having to raise the rest. The Free Hospital joined in heartily with the various fundraising efforts. No one could foresee that the Affiliated Hospitals Center was not to be achieved as a physical entity for years to come. However, as already stated, its main project was to get on with the proposed merger.

On June 7, 1961, the Trustees of The Free Hospital instructed the President, with fellow-members Richard Paine and Robert Wiese, to meet with representatives of the Lying-in Hospital to discuss procedures for the merger of The Free Hospital and the Lying-in Hospital. The following month Dean Berry of the Medical School, and Dr. George Smith, urged cooperation to bring about the suggested merger. But it was slow work. It became apparent to the Trustees that not only were there operating questions to be decided, but there were legal complications which could be solved only by act of the Massachusetts legislature. On January 10, 1962, President Morss reported to the Trustees that the meetings which he and Mr. Wiese had held with the group from the Lying-in Hospital had been inconclusive. Dr. Duncan Reid of the Lying-in Hospital was laboring to bring about the merger, but even his low-pressure approach had not as yet produced results.

In May of 1962, it was thought that a request should be made to the Children's Hospital to provide quarters for a merged Obstetrical and Gynecological hospital in its proposed new building, but nothing happened. What to do with hospital buildings that might no longer be required presented a problem which could not be readily solved. In July of 1962 Mr. Morss told the Trustees that the Lying-in Hospital was deeply interested in a merger with The Free Hospital and had appointed a committee to achieve that end. As a result the Board appointed a committee consisting of Messrs. Morss, Wiese and Rapalyea to consult with the Lying-in Hospital committee. At this time the Harvard Medical School sent word that a merger of the two hospitals would be a major step in the proposed integration of all the teaching hospitals into the proposed hospital complex.

Efforts seemed to keep shifting back and forth between the merger of the two hospitals and the construction of the new Harvard Medical

complex. Frustration was apparent at times. The report to the Trustees of one meeting of joint committees said, "No one at the meeting had any practical ideas." Generalities were rampant. Miss Grahn and Dr. Smith were not deterred by these generalities; for them the realities of the situation were paramount. Miss Grahn, while she deplored the slowness of materialization of the plan, nevertheless continued to express her belief that the interests of the hospitals and their patients would be best served by a merger. She pointed out that at the Harvard Medical School the Department of Gynecology had been combined with the Department of Obstetrics, and because of the natural alliance of these two services it would be desirable to bring the two hospitals together. Dr. Smith, on his part, brought out the need which had become more and more pressing over several decades to depart from the concept of a specialized hospital and the need to move toward a hospital dedicated to the complete medical care which was contemplated in the idea of an Affiliated Hospitals Center with a merged hospital for women built on the long records of The Free Hospital and the Lying-in Hospital.

Meetings to discuss merger went on into 1963. Discussions began to be more definite. On May 8th, President Morss told the Trustees of the questions which were beginning to surface as prerequisites to merger, among the chief of which were what to do with the endowment fund of \$8,000,000. and whom to obtain for a new chief of the combined hospitals. At long last, on April 8, 1964 the Trustees voted that it was their belief that a merger with the Lying-in Hospital was desirable and the Corporation was urged to take definitive action. On November 19th, the Corporation voted to authorize application to the Massachusetts legislature to give statutory approval of the merger. The legislature was to be told that the Trustees of both hospitals recognized the unique relationship which existed between them and the Harvard Medical School, and to acquaint that august body with all the advantages to be obtained by a merger with particular emphasis on the benefits that would accrue to patient care and to medical research and education.

Counsel advised the Trustees that it would take some time to get approval through the legislature. In the meantime both hospitals appointed co-ordinating committees to smooth out the machinery of merger. In January of 1965 it was agreed that the name of the new hospital would be "The Boston Hospital for Women," and thereby one bothersome problem was solved. The Free Hospital would be

called the Parkway Division and the Lying-in Hospital would be called the Lying-in Division.

On May 2, 1966, acting under authority granted by Chapter 192 of the Massachusetts Legislature Acts of 1965, the Boston Hospital for Women was incorporated. The new President was Robert C. Wiese and the new Co-Chiefs of Staff were Dr. George Van S. Smith and Dr. Duncan E. Reid. The newly formed hospital had 145 gynecological beds, 120 obstetrical beds, and 120 bassinets.





## *Chapter XII*



THE FORMATION of The Boston Hospital for Women might have seemed to many like the end of The Free Hospital for Women, but it was not so. At one of the Hospital's annual meetings Dr. Christopher J. Duncan had outlined the four main purposes of a hospital.

The first and most important was the care of the patient. There was no change in this function at the Parkway Division. The same famous service was available under a very capable staff. In fact the developments of the years following World War II had increased the quality of services to an even higher level. Exacting standards had come from the dedicated clinicians over the period of almost one hundred years, and in all branches of medicine, fine doctors had fostered their surgical and medical heritage with outstanding results. In addition, improved achievements were being obtained by the use of new biochemical drugs.

The second important purpose in Dr. Duncan's view was the training of residents and students. The training program was not one which diminished by the merger. Rather it was enhanced by even closer relationship with the Harvard Medical School and the Harvard Medical Center which the merger effected. It provided a broader field of study. It provided an enlarged faculty as well as greater facilities for work in medical laboratories.

The third purpose mentioned was the stimulation of its staff by a hospital. The merger in no way decreased the number of group meetings and seminars for staff members which for many years had been part of The Free Hospital's program. Its unique Ladies' Visiting

Board carried on with all its former dedication with a spirit wholly admirable.

Dr. Duncan's final purpose of a hospital was the conduct of research. With Dr. George Smith and Dr. Olive Smith in continuing charge of the Fearing Laboratory there could be no falling off in the research field. Their single-mindedness of search for elusive answers has excited the admiration of all who have known about it. If anything, the merger gave them more time to direct the research.

In all four categories established by Dr. Duncan the purposes of the old Free Hospital were being met and are still being met in this hundredth year.

There is still another quality not possessed by many of today's hospitals, but one which is possessed in great measure by The Free Hospital for Women and its successor; the quality of high tradition. Those who founded and those who later conducted its affairs would probably experience surprise to hear themselves characterized as great. Greatness is hard to define. It is easier to know what it is than to say what it is. In reading about the people who built The Free Hospital and who are still carrying on its growth there has gradually come a recognition that here were and are many individuals who were cast in the same average mold into which many of us fit, but there has also come the feeling out of past and present records that here have been and are men and women possessed of greatness, and their numbers are all out of proportion to the size of this one hospital. Great or not-so-great the hundreds of those who have served within its walls created a hospital which over the hundred years since 1875 has come to take its place in the vanguard of the great crusade against human suffering.

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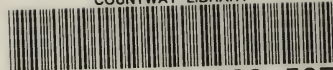


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